



# USS HADDO NEWSLETTER



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## From the Editor:

Greetings all, I finally have something to submit. I will plan on the next letter in October. Yet if there is someone who would like to take over this task, let me know and I will send an editable copy in ODF format your way.

I encourage input about service on other boats, I am sure there are non Haddo service members who visit the site and are welcome to submit their stories too.

The following was submitted by *Lou Storm, McKinney, TX*  
**'Twas The Night**

A'w right, ye landlubbers & shore huggers. Ye who would be unworthy of the Barley House down on SMU Blvd. Okay. So, leave it there. Leave your best out there still on the playing field. That's right. DON'T give your very best. DON'T give your very best. UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU! YES, HE ..... STILL ... WANTS ..... YOU!!!!

### What's your Call? Your assignment? WRITE!

Let me make this real plain & simple. IF YOU GOT DOLPHINS PINNED TO YOUR CHEST ????? *By definition* ... YOU ..... GOT ... SEA ... STORIES!!!! Only two requirements here: be breathing -- & if you are reading this, that Qual Card Line is Signed Off by one of your Qualed Superiors. And #2. SOME-body. Probably about 100 or so somebodies – PINNED THOSE DOLPHINS NOT ONLY ONTO YOUR CHEST, but probably pinned those Dolphins even a little bit INTO your chest!

SO.

### Will you join me here?????

I don't have time the rest of my years to write all my sea stories. I'm 74, so the fuse is short on that torpedo. (Yeah! I am so old that when I qualed, my sub, the HADDO, and only two others, were in Commission – the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* – and all we had were

fused torpedoes; and yes, they did & do burn when wet & even under water.)

But one of my many prayers in life? I've probably watched *Hunt For Red October* 40-or-50 times. My goal is at least a "hun-ert" before I die. I've probably watched *Crimson Tide* at least 15. I'm shooting for at least 50. Don't you have some recollection; a.k.a., a "no shitter," pop into your brain every time you watch *U-235*???

Yesterday I started just a little thing – I had hoped. O! Lou! You fool; you fool. I wanted to run down Guy Mendenhall. A "horse" LT on HADDO when I reported aboard. (Do you remember the word "horse?" Trivia quiz: What did/does it mean? **A.?** NEXT ISSUE – if there is one.)

So ... I stray off The Nav's plotted course here --- which will have a deleterious effect on the SOA he and the Cap'n want me to achieve ....

So, I was trying to run down my old mentor & SUPER human being in general, Corwin Guy Mendenhall III. We hadn't spoken since he walked the wrong way off the brow & detached from HADDO. The wrong way meaning I haven't seen him since.

What I prayed would be 20-40 minutes of digging into Internet resources; USN resources; USNA resources; etc., I GO SUCKED DOWN BY THE SUCTION AROUND THE SCREW. I finally quit reading or skimming probably 20 or so HADDO Newsletters about 2:15 a.m. About 13+ hours on my 20–40-minute project.

### SO. IS THERE A POINT HERE, LOU?????

**O! For sure, for sure, Shipmates.**

I made a one-word-to-maybe-a-2/3-sentence hen-scratched list totaling probably 50 or more from the memory-joggers reading other people's notes in the HADDO NEWSLETTER over the years.

SO.

**Will you join me here?????**

LET'S NOT LET THIS NEWSLETTER DIE!

THEY ("THEY" = ALL THE CURRENT & FORMER EDITORS) ALL SAY THEY NEED MORE CONTENT.

LET'S THROW 'EM A LIFE RING!

OR A CASE OF TRITIUM THAT'S BEEN SURVEYED  
*(Remember: It is so light it floats!*

**Guys. YOU HAVE THE POWER!**

If I can scare up six pages of one one-liners to remind me which story to cull off this old hard-drive brain of mine – just by skimming around 20 of 60+ newsletters – SO CAN YOU!

**SO! Will you join me here????? Can you help out your Shipmates & GIVE SOME OF IT (your memories) UP ?????**

*Guest Column by Lou Storm, McKinney, TX*

**'Twas The Night – BEFORE – PART TWO**

So back to what I intended to write in PART ONE before I wandered off-course on assorted tangents.

**DATELINE: December 1972.**

**LOCATION:** Cross-Atlantic Transit. Trying to get the Crew & O-Gang back home to NLON before Christmas. It'll be close!!!

**MOST SOBERING MOMENT:** We passed over USS SCORPION'S final resting place.

Just about every crew-member asks permission of the OOD to enter "The Conn" at least twice every day. They are looking at the Nav's chart – checking the SOA box. "How we doin' gettin' home for Christmas?," they ask the JOOD or QMOW – or just observe for themselves.

Many have assembled a Short-Timer's-Chain & attached it to a belt loop. A link gets snipped off every day about ½-of-1 second after 2400 hours each day. Though reality is the final day on the chain will be close to a full day for many, the link is toast as soon as tomorrow arrives!

The cross-Atlantic transit from "The Med" to NLON takes about 8-9 days as I recall. VERY BORING!!! Sprint for 40-70 minutes; slow; clear Baffles; quickly back down to transit depth & speed. Move that SOA box along. BORING!!!

And did I mention – BORING! MOST ESPECIALLY THE MID-WATCH!!!

But our FAB XO, LCDR J. Stephen Perry – not only one helluva Naval Officer; &, one helluva Nuclear

Submarine Officer; ..... **AND BEST MAN IN MY WEDDING** in Pascagoula 12/21/73, also was blessed with a great sense of humor & Dennis-the-Menace mischievousness.

XO gathered about a dozen of us who were NOT on Watch that night for The Mid; came up with Christmas songbooks from somewhere on-board (Remember – no Internet in that era); held a very brief whispered Rehearsal in the Wardroom; then he led us Christmas Carolling at every Watch Station; the Mess Decks; &, every berthing space. YEAH, XO!

*Guest Column by Lou Storm, McKinney, TX*

## Eternal Patrol

COB Joseph F. Ohara

Our COB passed away at 1AM on January 3rd, 2023 he would have been 92 years old on 1/29/2023. In addition he was a Qualified (DO) Diving Officer and (OOD) Qualified Officer of the Deck, E-9 Quartermaster.

Funeral/Viewing/Mass/Burial, January 12, 10AM - Saint Mary Church, 3529 St. Mary Rd, Wapwallen, Pa 18660. Burial at Church Cemetery. Cards can be sent to his Daughter: Audrey Cooper, 84 West Hartford Rd, Ashley, Pa 18706. The Haddo's success was in part to his leadership handling the crew. Dick Noble and myself will be there representing the Haddo, many of us served 4 years plus with this man. The Haddo small wardroom produced 4 Admirals 2 to 4 stars plus many Submarine skippers, and the Boat served our nation well until decommissioning in 1992. God Bless Him. Sailor Rest Your Oar.

## Special mention

REMEMBERING MY SHIPMATE JOHN MICHEL

By Don Walsh, Captain, USN (Ret)

US Navy Submersible Pilot #1



We met in January 1959 when I became the first Officer in Charge of the Navy's newly acquired Bathyscaph Trieste and John was the first USN enlisted man to be assigned to the project. We were based at the Naval Electronics Laboratory in San Diego.

Trieste was unique as there were only two deep diving manned submersibles in the world. The French Navy had the other. Our team learned about the bathyscaph more by 'apprenticeship' than through any sort of formal learning process. Our 'teachers' were the Swiss inventor Jacques Piccard and his Italian mechanic, Giuseppe Buono. Everything was 'one-off', when something was needed we had to design and build it. This situation was ideal for John, a consummate professional in solving technical problems. We joked that if we wanted something

made, we'd just write a general request on a 3x5 card and slip it under the door of his well-equipped shop. Then leave him alone, and in due course the finished piece was delivered.

Not only was John technically brilliant, he was a wonderful shipmate. An 'old world craftsman', he paid no attention to clock or calendar when things needed to be done. From being a diver to boat driver, John was always there. I never saw him in a bad mood even during the most trying days as we tested Trieste prior to our deepest dive in 1960. His upbeat personality, sense of humor and unmatched story telling abilities were great morale boosters for the whole team.

His skills as a problem solver reached new heights when a serious failure with our pressure hull threatened to end the program before our dive into Challenger Deep. John worked out a brilliant field fix and executed it. While it was not 'good as new' it was quite safe for resuming our dive program.

After the fix Jacques Piccard and I made two more dives, one to 24,000 and the other to 35,912 feet. With the latter being to the deepest place in the World Ocean. Literally, we bet our lives on John's work.

We continued to work together with Trieste for nearly three more years. There are many more stories to be told about those days but no room for them here...

I was honored to serve with Master Chief Petty Officer E. John Michel, shipmate and friend. Fair winds and seas as you embark on your last sea duty...

Captain Don Walsh USN (Ret)

US Navy Submersible Pilot #1

Master Chief John Michel, Hero and Friend

Kevin Hardy

Scripps Institution of Oceanography/UCSD (Ret)

John Michel was born in Brooklyn, New York, July 25, 1933 to German immigrant parents. He learned shop skills from his father and many "uncles" in their close-knit neighborhood. He attended a technical high school to hone his machinist skills. Working in New York City machine shops during and following high school, he learned to manage them: the men, machines, materials, and orders. That served him well after he enlisted in the US Navy during the Korean War. He ran the machine shop of the USS Prairie (AD-15), a Dixie-class destroyer tender. On one of John's deployments, the Prairie circumnavigated the globe. In his new assignment with Project Nekton, he recalled machinery on the Prairie that he was able to acquire to repair the Trieste pressure hull misalignment Walsh spoke of. As a result of solving deep sea mission challenges, John and the USN received a number of patents for his inventions. While in Project Nekton, he attended and graduated from the U.S. Navy Divers School. He had a few close encounters while SCUBA diving to support Trieste. On 24 June 1965, John descended to 3,500-ft (583 fathoms) in bathyscaph Trieste II with then LCDR James B. Mooney, Jr., whom John called "a prince of a man."

John was proud of his German heritage, and spoke the language fluently. When Professor Auguste Piccard, Swiss inventor of the Trieste, came to visit the boat and crew in San Diego, he could speak German, French and Italian, but not English. John became his translator, and accompanied him everywhere as he toured the Point Loma Submarine Base. Auguste was impressed with John's language skills, good nature, and technical knowledge of the bathyscaph.

Those who knew John fondly recall his mischievous chuckle when telling one of his many stories. He was an elite shell collector and passionate student of the topic. John passed peacefully surrounded by family and friends on 14 December 2022. John is survived by his wife, Nola, son, Mark, his wife, Rebecca, granddaughter, Rachel, daughter-in-law, Marilyn, and granddaughters Kristin and Megan. He is predeceased by his youngest son, Neil.

John served as an inspiration to younger crew: demonstrating a commitment to high standards, the willingness to accept extraordinary challenges, and core belief he had the right stuff to solve the most seemingly complex problems, then move them into the “done” column.

A Celebration of Life is planned for February 19 in San Diego. Details to follow. For further information please contact Mark Michel <spiderlaw@cox.net>.

In lieu of flowers, John’s family requests donations be made to the U.S. Navy Divers Memorial at Miramar National Cemetery, San Diego