



1943



1972



THE BANG GANG NEWSLETTER

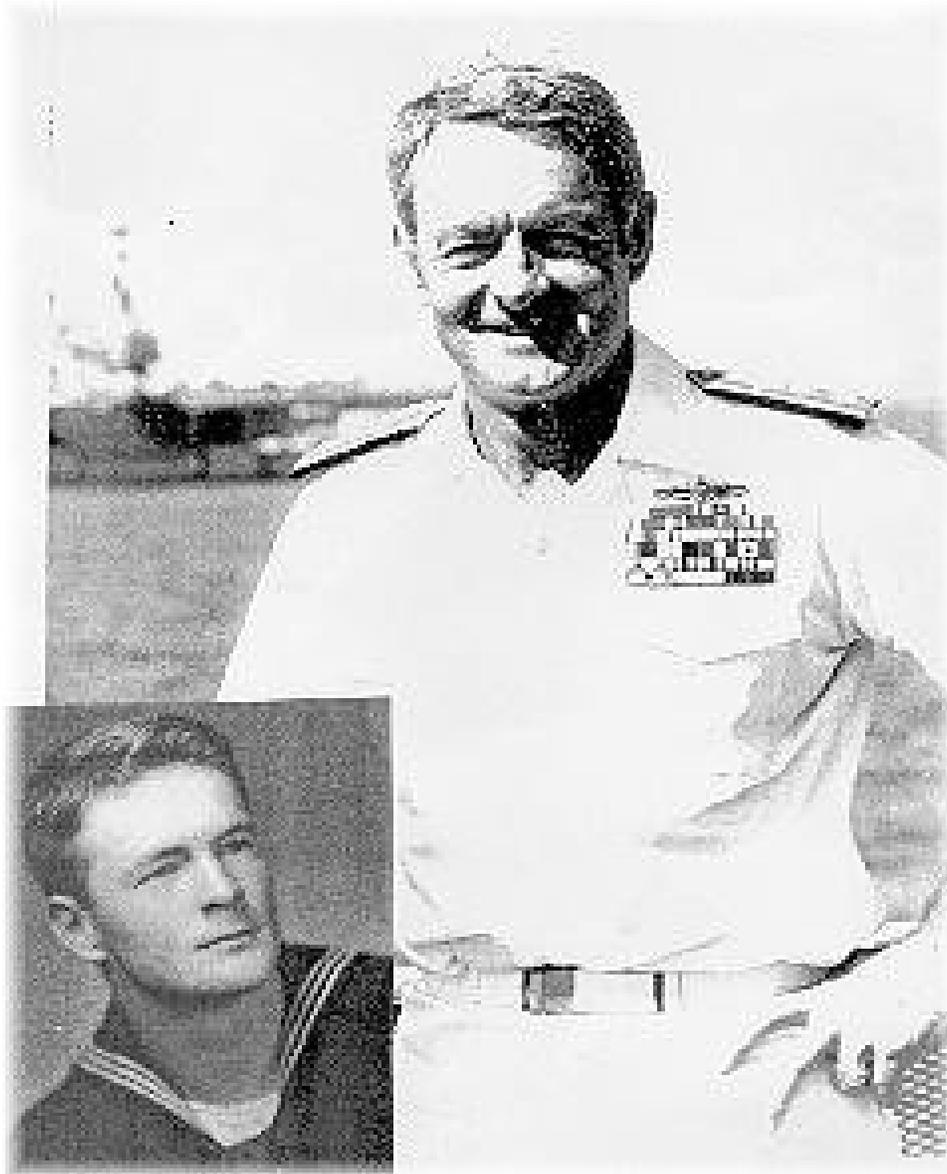
Published to perpetuate the memory of USS BANG (SS-385) and her Crew

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FALL/WINTER 2009

WWW.USSBANG.COM

ISSUE-54



1927 Alexander 'Mal' Sinclair 2009



LOST AND FOUND



This column is dedicated to informing you of any additions, deletions, or corrections to our active roster.
It has been brought to our attention that the following shipmates have passed away and will be placed on Eternal Patrol.



Jack O. Glendening, SN (51-52) ComCrew2

Rex N. Carpenter, TM (56-57)

Henry W. Conoly, STS (68-72)

Max L. Hemsley, QM (54-56)

Alex M. Sinclair, CO (62-64)



SHIPMATES, REST YOUR OARS!

The following shipmate has changed his mailing address.

Please let us know when your address has changed or you may not receive the next Newsletter.

LASTNAME	FIRSTNAME	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIPCODE	PHONE	Y-O-B
LaPorte	Benjamin J	531 Piney Grove Rd	Hampton	TN	37658-3703	(423) 725-2949	57-60

The following shipmates are new (found) additions to our roster. Your committee is thankful for all your help in locating them and we will continue our search until we have attempted to locate everyone.

LASTNAME	FIRSTNAME	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIPCODE	PHONE	Y-O-B
Allmon	Jeffery T	3570 NC Highway 43	Vanceboro	NC	28586-8946	(252) 244-1370	60-62
Ingraham	William H	4 Sheridan Rd	Bedford	MA	01730-1530	(781) 275-7466	68-70
Milici	Ronald J	45 Hillside Ave	Arlington	MA	02476-5834	(781) 646-7379	64-67
Peterfreund	Richard	414 10th St	Brooklyn	NY	11215-4009	(718) 499-3974	64-66
Taff	Clarence O	2258 San Ysidro St	Camarillo	CA	93010-2350	(805) 482-5953	69-71
Wyman	William E	19 Mast Rd	Newfields	NH	03856-8102	(603) 772-4943	69-71



THANK YOU!

Since our last publication, the following shipmates have generously donated to our slush fund.



**Ike Cohen
Don Gotta
Deane Hadfield**

**Charlie Heater
Tom Hill
Charlie Kimball**

**Al Mace
Bill Mancuso
Ernie Raspe**

**Tex Schovajsa
Paul Schramm
Tom Stewart**

**Wayne Thalasinis
Bob White**



THE INTERNET CONNECTION
CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION



Dan All danall@embarqmail.com
Jeffery Allmon . marthaallmon@earthlink.net
Charles Archer . patriciaarcher@verizon.net

William Ingraham . Ingraham6@verizon.net
Jerry Lagestee . grldlagestee459@gmail.com
William Wyman . wjwyman@comcast.net



This column is dedicated to all the letters we receive from you. Any info about yourself or others you want to share with your shipmates will be published here. Think of this as a combination of the bulletin board in the Crew's Mess and the IMC.

Editor's Notes and Ramble: Hi Shipmates!

Dot and I are now back in Florida and will be stationed here until at least mid May. Please note the address change on the front page of this Newsletter.



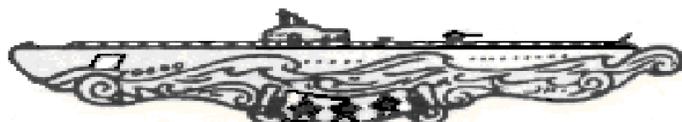
I was notified of Rex Carpenter's death by **Ed Kracker** and **Bill Fenton**. I also received a nice 'Thank You' note from Rex's daughter, Martha Cole, for signing the guest book.

LCDR. Rex Norman Carpenter, USN, Ret., 83 of Las Cruces entered eternal life



Monday, October 19, 2009. He was born March 15, 1926 in Spring Hill, West Virginia to Earl Dee and Marie Alice Taylor Carpenter. Mr. Carpenter served his country honorably for 28 years in the U.S. Navy, including World War II, the Korean Conflict and Vietnam War, having earned several decorations. He was the past National

President of U.S. Submarine Veterans of WWII, a member of the Military Officers Association of America, VFW Post #10124, as well as the American Legion, U.S. Submarine Veterans and the Fleet Reserve Association. Mr. Carpenter was also a volunteer with the Bureau of Land Management and the Salvation Army. Survivors include his loving wife of 56 years, Patience of the family home; a son, Rex M. Carpenter (Danae) of Tracy, California; one daughter, Martha Jean Cole (Thomas) of Virginia Beach, Virginia. Other survivors include four grandchildren, Jesse Ray Carpenter, Wyatt Evan Carpenter, Abbey Taylor Carpenter and Thomas Rex Cole; an aunt, Dorothy Dykeman of Fair Oaks, California, as well as several nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents, a brother, Raymond J. Carpenter and a sister, Betty Hart of California. At his request, cremation will take place and a Memorial Service will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions can be made in his honor to the Salvation Army, PO Box 269, Alexandria, Virginia, 22313.



Paul Anderson was the bearer of this sad news.

Jack Owen Glendening, 81, of Forestville, CT, widower of Constance (Vandrilla) Glendening and Kathleen (Dutkiewicz) Glendening, died on Oct. 12, 2009. Jack was born on April 12, 1928, in Marysville, Ohio, son of the late Fred and Helen (Barker) Glendening. Jack served in the U.S. Navy 1947 -54 during the Korean War and qualified submarines in 1947 onboard USS TORSK (SS 423). He also served onboard USS BANG (SS 385) and the USS RAY (SS 271). After the Navy Jack settled in Forestville, CT where he was employed as an engineer for Rowland Products in Berlin, CT. Jack joined us at USSVI Groton Base in 2002, he was a Life and Holland Club member. He was known as Grampa Jack to many and always had a warm smile, a joke and a story to tell. He enjoyed his Subvet meetings, his trips to Vermont, all animals, woodworking, reading, playing pool, and visiting with his brother, friends and family.

He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Kathleen and Rick Govotski, of Bellows Falls, Vt.; his much loved grandchildren, Kelsey, Justin, Jana, and Martin; his brother, Leonard Glendening, of Bristol; his buddy, Nancy Roman, of Plainville; and several nieces and nephews. Jack's funeral was held on Oct. 17, 2009, at the O'Brien Funeral Home, Forestville. Burial, with military honors, followed in St. Joseph Cemetery, Bristol.



Ronald Gecks (67-70) sends us this photo of himself and his daughter at the JacCenDel grade school on this past Veterans Day. I guess he was recruiting some future submariners.



I never had the opportunity to meet **Alex Sinclair** as by the time us “young Gang” were graciously invited by our WWII BANG shipmates to start attending their annual blowouts, Alex was already battling Parkinson’s Disease which kept him away from our Reunions and eventually cost him his life. What I did learn about him came from the shipmates who served under him and **Don Hall**, a personal friend of the Admiral, who kept me updated on Mal’s health over the years.



Alex was a typical ‘white hat’ who became a very special naval officer, rising to the rank of Rear Admiral. He was an exceptional leader of men and a sailor’s sailor in every sense of the term. But, above all, Alex was a Submariner!

He had an extraordinary sense of humor and a generous spirit who always took the time to thank or commend people others wouldn't normally give credit to, and thus, his peers and subordinates held him in high esteem.

Ken Moulton, a life long friend of the Admiral said, *"That's a real true test when your enlisted men really think highly of you. He went out of his way to help out the enlisted men."*

Alex also kept himself physically fit and encouraged his crews to join him in his daily workouts. He also would promote sporting activities for them to participate in though, I surmise this was so he could join them.

Mal Sinclair summarized his Naval career in a letter he wrote to Hall & Moulton in 2001:

"Needless to say, my style of leadership was, shall we say, different from the norm. I most always played it by ear, and by my gut feel. Often, my decisions were ‘out-of-the-box’, and drew lots of attention, and controversy in the submarine force, but we beat the competition hands down in all categories, including tactics, reenlistment rate, etc., plus we won the squadron “E”.

I think I was more lucky than good during my 38 years of service, but it seemed like I always had great sailors as shipmates on the ships I commanded. I should add that my enlisted service gave me a unique insight on how to apply leadership principles."

Mal’s last correspondence to Hall & Moulton was only four words: *“i try really hard”*.

Rear Admiral Alexander Malcolm Sinclair USN-RET, age 82, of Great Falls, VA died on September 14, 2009 at Arleigh Burke Nursing Center.



He was born on January 30, 1927 to the late Alexander M. and Dorothy Smith Sinclair. He was born and raised in Santa Cruz, CA where he grew up with his life long friend, Ken Moulton, body surfing and delivering papers. During his time spent on the beach Alex became friends with a

lifeguard named Hubert Mee, who was a survivor of the sinking of the USS QUINCY CA-39 in Savo Sound, just north of Guadalcanal in 1942. Mee was credited with rescuing QUINCY shipmates from the water.

After graduating from Santa Cruz High School in 1944 at the age of 17, he attended the College of the Pacific (now Univ. of the Pacific) where he played football for Amos Alonzo Stagg, a legend in the collegiate game and a Collegiate Football Hall of Fame member. Sinclair was named to the All Coast team that season, which caught the attention of then Navy coach, Eddy Erderlatz, Sinclair enlisted in the Navy at the end of his first college semester, December 1944, and was serving on active duty as a corpsman prior to receiving his Fleet appointment to the United States Naval Academy. (Had Sinclair not played football at Pacific before enlisting in the Navy, we might be honoring Alex Sinclair HM2, a rank he may have achieved by the end of his 4 year hitch.) While at the Academy he was a member of the varsity football and track teams.

After graduation with the class of 1951, his first assignment was aboard the USS ANTIETAM (CV 36) operating as a unit of the Seventh Fleet in the Sea of Japan during the Korean War.

His next two sea assignments, in succession, were aboard the USS SHANGRI LA (CV 38) and the USS YORKTOWN (CV 10). While deployed to the Seventh Fleet on the USS Yorktown he was one of the first in his class to receive orders to Command. As a LT(jg) he assumed command of the coastal minesweeper USS FIRECREST (AMS 10) and did combat minesweeping operations in and around the Yellow Sea. The ship was home ported in Sasebo, Japan.

He next attended Submarine School in New London, CT, followed by sea assignments on USS RASHER (SS 269) and USS BAYA (SS 319). He became Executive Officer on USS PIPER (SS 409) followed by his assuming command of USS BANG (SS 385). While in command of BANG the submarine made a highly successful Special Operations Patrol in the Barents Sea off the Kola Inlet.

Following submarine command, Sinclair was assigned as

Executive Officer on the Guided Missile Cruiser USS DALE (CG 19), which completed a Seventh Fleet Deployment including the Gulf of Tonkin operations during the Viet Nam War.

His next assignment was as Commanding Officer of the Destroyer Escort USS EDWARD McDONNELL (DE 1043), deployed to the Sixth Fleet.

Alex was then assigned to command the Guided Missile Cruiser USS LEAHY (CG 16). The ship made a Sixth Fleet deployment to the Mediterranean Sea. During this cruise in 1975 the USS LEAHY made an historic port of call at Saint Petersburg, a Soviet port, as an expression of goodwill between the countries. Thus the USS LEAHY was the first US Navy ship to visit the Soviet Union in over thirty years.

The Leahy departed England with US admirals and dignitaries for the trip to Leningrad, and stopped to add Soviet admirals and dignitaries at a Soviet base near the Neva River. While navigating the Neva River the LEAHY'S bridge, filled with honorary guests, was under navigational command of a Soviet river pilot.

At one point, the pilot ordered a steering change, and Alex, immediately sensing the order was in error, announced over the ship's intercom that he had relieved the Soviet pilot, and was once again in command. A highly unusual action, relieving a pilot in unfamiliar waters, Alex explained that the Soviet pilot was not familiar with the maneuverability of the twin-screw LEAHY, and the pilot's order would have grounded the ship. Alex added that his immediate thought was "The safety of my ship and my crew come before all else". The Leahy continued on to Leningrad without further incident. This course of action impressed one Soviet admiral so much that he continued to prod the US admirals in attendance by saying "you should promote this man". One of those American admirals sat on the promotion board when Alex was promoted to admiral.

Upon arriving in Long Beach, CA after a very successful cruise to the Soviet Union, and a journey through the Panama Canal, the LEAHY was being greeted on the pier with the band playing, flags flying, families members of the crew waving and numerous admirals and dignitaries waiting to board. Captain Sinclair, the ever considerate CO, and loving son, ordered his mother (and her neighbor friend) piped aboard before all others.

After Selection to Flag rank and several Pentagon tours, RADM Sinclair's last sea assignment was COMMANDER CRUISER DESTROYER GROUP FIVE in the Pacific Fleet. While in command of GROUP FIVE he was deployed to the Seventh Fleet as a BATTLE GROUP COMMANDER on his flagship USS CHICAGO (CG 9). Aboard CHICAGO, Alex returned to the site of the sinking of his good friend's (Hubert Mee) ship USS QUINCY and placed a wreath in tribute to those who lost their lives in 1942.

He retired from the Navy in 1982 after a very active 38 years of duty to the Navy and our Country.

After retirement Admiral Sinclair attended American University Law School, became a member of the Washington, D.C. Bar and a practicing attorney. His practice consisted primarily of criminal defense work in the Criminal Division of the Washington D.C. court system.

Admiral Sinclair was a mentor to his children and grandchildren and to countless young people during private life, his career in the Navy and during his law practice in the juvenile court system in Washington D.C.

Also, for his brief 'visit' to College of the Pacific, and achieving flag rank, the Pacific Alumni Assoc. named Alex to their Distinguished Alumni honor roll.

Alex was the beloved husband of 59 years of Ginny Sinclair, loving and devoted father of Amy Dahm and her husband Henry of Great Falls, VA and Elizabeth Larson and her husband Willard of San Diego, CA, proud grandfather of Alex Dahm and his wife Kerry, Nick Dahm, Tyler Larson, Zachary Larson and Katelynn Larson.

Graveside services with full military honors will be held on Tuesday, December 22nd at 1300 hours at Arlington National Cemetery.

The family suggests that memorial contributions be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation of Parkinson's Research, Attn; Tribute Gifts, Church Street Station, P.O. Box 780, New York City, NY 10008-0780.

*Along the shore I spy a ship
As she sets out to sea;
She spreads her sails and sniffs the breeze
And slips away from me.*

*I watch her fading image shrink,
As she moves on and on,
Until at last she's but a speck,
Then someone says, "She's gone."*

*Gone where? Gone only from our sight
And from our farewell cries;
That ship will somewhere reappear
To other eager eyes.*

*Beyond the dim horizon's rim
Resound the welcome drums,
And while we're crying, "There she goes!"
They're shouting, "Here she comes!"*

*We're built to cruise for but a while
Upon this trackless sea
Until one day we sail away
Into infinity.*

TILL WE MEET AGAIN SHIPMATE!!!



Ginny Sinclair wishes to express her thanks for the numerous and wonderful responses entered in the Sinclair Guestbook by The Bang Gang, and for the nice letters she received personally from Bang crewmen.

Anyone wishing to send their condolences to Ginny and Family may do so to the following address:

Ginny Sinclair
1101 Jonquil Cir.
Great Falls, VA 22066-1824

REMEMBERING ALEX SINCLAIR

Alex Sinclair was our "skipper" on submarine USS Bang when we made a very important, dangerous, top secret Northern Run into the Ruskies waters off the Kola in 63. The Ruskies forced the submarine Sea Lion to surface and nearly sunk it; however, Alex outfoxed them time and time again as they tried to get us. He was a brilliant skipper, a patriot, a fine human being and a very special brethren submariner as one of us. Now he is out on Eternal Patrol with the rest of our brethren out there and one day it will again be our honor and privilege to join and serve with him. May our Eternal Father bless our skipper's eternal soul and comfort his dear family that he leaves behind. ~ **Paull Anderson**

Alex Sinclair greatly influenced my Navy career and my life. I served with him on USS Bang SS-385 from the day he reported aboard as a Prospective Commanding Officer until he transferred off to his next duty.

Even today, I would go with Alex Sinclair no matter where the trip. In my 31+ years of Naval service he stands out above all other Naval Officers I served with. God Bless Alex Sinclair and his family. They need to know that the men who served under him idolized him and would go to hell and back with him as the skipper. ~ **Lamarr A. Seader**

I served under Alex aboard Bang when we made the patrol in 63. In 2000, I contacted Alex by letter and it wasn't long before I received one back from him. He said that he remembered that patrol as if it had happened yesterday and gave a salute to everyone who was on that crew at the time. I served under three different Captains while I was on Bang, and Alex was by far the best!!! I remember when he transferred, and the entire crew wanted to go with him. God Bless, Alex!! Our sympathy to all.

~ **Dallas Dixon**

It was my duty to serve under him but my honor after knowing him. He was the very best CO but even better human being. Rest easy and one day we will all be together. ~ **Harry Ross**

Alex Sinclair was the perfect submarine commander. Respected by all, he embodied all of the leadership traits that a naval officer aspires to. He will be sorely missed by all of his shipmates. His personal example and values shaped the rest of my life.

One evening while standing the mid-watch on Bang, which was moored to the pier, I hailed a canteen truck to bring me a sandwich. After a few bites, I decided the sandwich was not fit for consumption. Not wishing to pollute the harbor waters, and having no trash receptacle at hand, I decided to get rid of the sandwich by stuffing it into Bang's fog horn, thinking that it would wash away the next time we submerged.

The following morning, the admiral and his staff came to the dock to see Bang get underway.

Following sailing protocol, the Union Jack is lowered at the bow, the Stars and Stripes is raised aft of the sail, and the fog horn is sounded. When it came time to sound the fog horn, instead of a clear, penetrating note, a terrible, muffled "phlaaaaaaat" was emitted, and the sandwich was expelled by vibration from the fog horn, landing on the deck.

Those on the dock roared with laughter, Sinclair smiled.

*After clearing the harbor, Sinclair announced throughout the sub: "Now hear this.... this is the captain.... I don't know who put the sandwich in the fog horn, and I don't want to know, but it better never happen again". ~ **Richard Barbieri***

I like many others was privileged to serve under Captain Sinclair on Bang during the Northern run into Russian waters in 1963. Over the years I have recalled many times the calm and efficient manner in which he maneuvered us out of harms way. I also recall that he was a fair and decent man who put the safety and welfare of his crew above all else. I wish him calm seas and following winds in his new career. I am sure that he will advance rapidly.

~ **Alan Moquin**

I served under him on USS Bang SS-385 from 1962 to 1964. He was an excellent skipper and a truly fine man. May he rest in peace. ~ **Dick Major**

Alex was a great officer and skipper. He presented me with his own dolphins when I qualified on Bang and I think of him often. He will be sorely missed.

~ **Mike Gothie**

He set the example for all of us by his respect for everyone, from mess cook to XO.

~ **Jimmie Richey**

He was a great Commanding Officer.
~ **Carl Weber, COB**

The wind is at your back. Have a wonderful voyage.
My first skipper and after 20 years, there was none better. ~ **Larry Schafer**

I was Alex's XO and we have lost a fine Naval Officer and gentleman. He was godfather to my 3rd son. Annette and I will be writing Ginny.
~ **George Bailey**

Sorry to hear the news of Alex Sinclair's passing.
~ **Tom Rolfe**

I attended the first funeral service yesterday at Alex's church, St. Francis Episcopal, just outside the beltway near Potomac River. I did not see any other Bang dudes there; was hoping to see **George Bailey** (XO) or other Bang locals. There were about 200 attendees, and Ginny Sinclair endured a very long reception line to meet and greet the crowd. Alex had to surface himself in the 60's because he would not be a nuke, but he did very well as a surface skimmer. He got a law degree after retirement, and chose to help the disadvantaged with this knowledge instead of trying to make a pile of money in the law business. There will be another service for him at Arl. Nat'l Cemetery on 22 December; hope more Bang shipmates can make it. It takes forever to get scheduled there because of all the retired dudes hitting the bricks and the guys coming in from the mideast. ~ **Steve Webster**

Billy Cromie, (64-71), writes "Patriotic Americans came out to "Salute The Troops" on a beautiful Saturday in downtown West Chester, PA. As always the best part was the end when we sang the National Anthem and said a prayer for our troops and country."



Merle Meyer, (64-67), writes that you may want to check out this web site.

www.vfwwelcomehome.com

"This is a program started by a guy from the VFW in New Richmond, WI to welcome home veterans from Vietnam era to present. I am going to suggest they change the name of this function to Veterans Appreciation because quite a few of the Vietnam Veterans in the area didn't want to be involved and numerous other veterans were uncomfortable with the idea of being Welcomed Home at this late date." Below is a photo of Merle receiving his just deserts.



Bud Alexander, XO (68-69) sent in some info for **John Lawton** on the Boston TV stations. Bud states that the 4 major TV stations in Boston during the 60's were, WBZ, WCVB, WHDH, and the PBS station WGBH. *Hope this is of some help to you John.*

Please remember the following shipmates in your prayers - **Bill McNeil**, 66-68 (cancer), **Dick Barringer**, 52-55 (heart), **Jack Myers**, 55-56 (cancer), **Ray Asselin**, 52-54 (legs).

GET WELL SOON SHIPMATES



Lou Arellano, (71-72) received the following e-mail while trying to locate shipmate **Henry Conoly** on the Internet.

"I am Elizabeth Conoly, the Daughter of "poo". He is unfortunately no longer with us. He passed away a few years ago of cancer. If you have any information or pictures about my daddy please send them to Kellyjo8612@yahoo.com Thank you, Liz Conoly"

Lou continues that "Henry Conoly was one our most



colorful, boisterous submarine shipmates and is one of the first people who comes to mind when I reflect on my submarine days. He had a unique style and a well-oiled drawl that was infectious. To this day I find myself mentally emulating his voice. Poo enjoyed unusual or mellifluous names and the Navy gave

him plenty of fodder with which to fabricate nicknames. I was there when Poo bestowed upon our newest seaman **Peter Rauhala** the nickname "Rooly-Hooley," which is even more enjoyable when you play the name back in Poo's own deep voice and with his special inflection. He had the skill to impart such nicknames and massacre pronunciation without being derogatory or offensive.

I'm not sure who gave Henry the nickname "Poo." I first heard it used by our fellow sonar technician **Clarence Worsham** (Poo would say "Clay-rence"). In any case, "Poo" stuck like glue. Victimized by his own hobby, he went with the flow, embraced and enjoyed it.

One of his most famous antics occurred upon returning from a particularly hard night of liberty (in St. Thomas, I think). He reportedly stripped down to his skivvies (one report says it was his birthday suit) and crawled down into the battery well, presumably to avoid the wrath of the duty officer, enjoy the ventilation and get some sleep in peace and quiet - 250 volt battery notwithstanding! Concerned that he might roll over in his sleep onto a live power bus, those of his shipmates who were sober and qualified to work in the battery well spent considerable effort extracting him. I'm sure other shipmates, especially those who spent their liberty with Poo, have plenty of sea stories.

All that aside, Henry was a well-qualified sonar technician and a perceptive, kind and generous leader. In one interim during which he was the most senior ST on board, he always went to bat for us

and was very fair in all the assignments he made. With grateful thanks to Henry, I was able to get home perhaps a bit more often to be with my future wife Barbara."

Billy Cromie, (64-71), also remembers Henry Conoly in his own way. "The first thing that comes to mind is the '55 Chevy Henry lovingly restored. I helped him with it by being the getaway driver when he jumped the fence at a junkyard in Norwich CT to get authentic push rods out of an engine he knew was there. After a lot of work and more money than he had, all it needed was a paint job. We were getting ready to go to the Med and Henry didn't want the car to sit all winter, so he worked out a deal where my wife would drive it while we were gone. Letting my wife behind the wheel of any vehicle is like giving a monkey a hand grenade. When we got back from the Med Henry found out she slid on ice, hit a tree head on and buckled the frame beyond salvation. I remember that well because I paid Henry for a new vehicle."



I recently received an e-mail from **Captain Benito Chereguini** first commanding officer of "Cosme Garcia". He asked to be included on our mailing list and related a story that proves all submariners are alike.

While crossing the Atlantic he had his crew fabricate a pair of sail planes and as they neared the coast of Spain they attached them to the sail. Upon arrival into port the dignitaries waiting on the pier saw the sail planes and thought Benito was bringing them a 'nuke' boat.



As you can see we are overwhelmed with news articles so the Reunion photos will have to wait to the next issue. Until then, for those of you with Internet access, **Ike Cohen** has posted lots of photos on-line at the below address:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/ikecohen911/USSBangReunion101909Thru102309?authkey=Gv1sRgCIGd5 OCI65DjdQ#>

Dot & I wish you and your families good health and much happiness.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!
HAPPY HANUKKAH!
HAPPY KWANZAA!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

The writings and material within this Newsletter are the sole responsibility of its Editor and in no way reflect the opinion of its readers, the Bang Gang.*Phil Beals*

Steve Webster, an Officer (62-64), "Bang brings many good memories and lotsa sea stories;

Like pressurizing the forward engine room so we could pull the forward engine room sea suction valves offa the hull on the way to Bermuda so the clams and mussels could be cleaned out and the AC restored to operation. On the pulling the FER sea suction event, I was the dude wearing the Jack Brown facemask, diving under Bang to unbolt the outboard FER strainer grates to pull on a chain to clear the piping of mussels as we rolled around in state 3-4 seas (rough). But truth be known, the heroes of the day were the "topside" support crew who handled my safety line, tie-in line, and air hose rig; they were getting pounded by every sea that crashed over the turtleback and sought to sweep their sorry butts into the briny deep. I think **Andrew Manzi** was one of them.

Like snorkeling thru the outboard exhausts during a northern run because the snorkel exhaust valve was frozen shut.

Like putting water on the 01 level of the Fulton when somebody opened safety flood (instead of negative) while it was pressurized to 35 PSI (for testing to see if we could fill it with fresh water for the N-run).

Like dragging **John Lawton's** limp body out of the bilges when he was asphyxiated by generator cleaning fluid fumes.

Like H2 battery well explosions (2 of them) because the Ashtabula rubber Co. put the wrong compound in the vent domes and caused the cells to self-pressurize.

After Alex left, **Bob Miller** became CO, and we made the famous 4th July trip to Eastport, Maine. The fog was so thick coming into the Bay of Fundy and Eastport that you couldn't see the bow from the bridge. We took aboard the "pilot", who was a lobster boatman, to get us up the 40 mile long, narrow passage from sea to Eastport. "We can't see anything, not a buoy, a lighthouse, a point of land, or anything. How do you know where we are?" asked Capt. Bob to the "pilot". He said: "Well, we lobster boatmen just take a heading, and when the bow

touches bottom, we turn the other way". (of course we had this thing, called a "Sonar Dome", up there where the bow hits the boulders). All Stop! Send "pilot" to the mess decks. Then **Lamarr Seader**, QM1 and our #1 Navigation Dude, suggested that if we detuned the radar, we could see the channel well enough to proceed. This was done, and we made it all the way, on the battery, to the Eastport pier in solid, you can't see squat, fog. The Eastport Maine City Firemen who manned the pier were amazed to see a big black submarine emerge silently from the fog and slide into position against the 24 foot high pilings of their pier. I'm not sure a lot of other subs would have pulled off this very good maneuver. The tide runs +/- 21 feet at Eastport (wow) and the topside watch had to tend the mooring lines constantly to either stay close to the pier or avoid over-tensioning a line as the sea level dropped. One of the topside watch lost his .45 over the side while we were there, and someone else recovered it by diving into the 40 degree water. I can't remember their names - dang. The Bang crew was the best of many boats I served on. There are other stories-

How to judge an Eastport beauty contest without offending anyone, or

How to slide the XO down a 60 degree brow into the FTR for a four hour recharge.

Thanks for your good work Phil. -----I remember a lot of the crew on '62-'64 Bang, and miss seeing them."*Steve, thanks again for the memories and a good cure for missing your shipmates is to attend a Reunion. Next, year we will be in New London. Hope to see you there.*

Jerry Lagestee, an ElectriciansMate (61-62), "I'm not sure if I informed you that I have switched my email so this message is to let you know that I have. Hopefully, it will remain the same for a long time.

I recalled the names of a few more shipmates from my era: **Hosie B. Parker** from Pascagoula, MS. he was an oiler; **William "Buck" Dohmer** in the AER who had served as the engineer on President Eisenhower's barge; and a TM named **Richard Dorman** from Twin Falls, ID.

When I graduated from Sub School, I took a week's leave and went to Philadelphia with a buddy. While I was in Philly a severe snow storm hit the entire northeast and I was stranded. Nothing moved. Bang was in the shipyard at Portsmouth NH and when I was finally able to catch a Greyhound bus, I made it to the boat. It was in the middle of the night when I got to the barge and an ET1(SS) named **Dalton Lewis**, Big Lew from Texas, had the watch. There was also an IC3(SS) named **Robert Wagner** from RI who one Friday consumed 11 lobsters at one sitting."....*Thank you for sending your new E address Jerry. Also appreciate the shipmate names. You got quite the memory.*

Rob Asselin, son of **Ray Asselin**, a QuarterMaster (52-54, ComCrew3), "My dad served on Bang and he always wishes he could attend the reunions. He recently had some problems with his upper leg and was admitted to the hospital. He is now in rehab and will hopefully return home the end of the month. His fondest times were those spent with his shipmates and he now enjoys telling sea stories much like all of us. As the old warrior gets old he talks about Bang all the time. I thought you could let folks know he is recovering from leg issues and would love to hear from anyone out there."

His home address is:

**369 High Hill Road.
Meriden CT. 06450**

Rob, thanks for letting us know about your dad. I hope some of his shipmates will drop him a line. Please tell you dad that the BANG reunion will be in New London next year at the end of September. Hopefully he will be getting around by then.

Dave Heath, a TorpedoMan (70-71), "My wife and I scuba dive and will be in Bonaire for three weeks so we can't attend this year. I do regret it because I see **Ron Plumlee** is coming and I would sure like to see him and say hello. Anyway great job on the newsletter and thanks to all who work so hard to run this group."....*Dave, Ron came to Virginia Beach but immediately left for home (personal matter). Why don't the two of you start making plans to get together next year in New London?*

James Drozd, a Chief QuarterMaster (63), "Things here at new house & surroundings doing ok. Busy remodeling, etc. Will fly to Mexico for the winter, 17 Nov- 3 Mar. Going on world cruise aboard container ship, 7 passengers. Underway from Houston, stop New Orleans, Philly, across to Antwerp, Hamburg, thru Gibraltar, to Italy. Suez to India, Indonesia, China, Viet-Nam, across to Long Beach, Panama canal, back to Houston. 4 month odyssey, will be interesting. Hope things are well on your end." ...*Jim, sounds like quite the trip. Hope you enjoy yourself.*

Larry Harjehausen, an Officer (57-60), "Shipmates, It is with deep regret that I am not joining you for this reunion. I thought that I would be able to drive up there but got into such a battle with my kids that I finally gave up on even taking the car out of the garage. The restrictions in our airports makes travel much more difficult for an 80 year old who is not really steady on these wobbly legs. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think that I would be this age. Life is good and I have my family, friends, and former shipmates to thank for making my life a very

satisfying adventure. I would do it all over again if given the opportunity to do so and there are not many things that I would change along the way.

The Bang Gang was the best crew that I ever had the pleasure of serving with and I am proud to have been part of such a fine group of men. Needless to say, I salute you.

I reported aboard as a fresh caught ensign in September 1957. Needless to say, it was a major jump from being a Chief Electrician's Mate on Nautilus to being the junior officer on board Bang. When I reported aboard I was eighth in seniority out of eight officers. When I left Bang I was 10th in seniority out of 10 officers on board. Talk about progress. After about two years our then XO, **LCDR Gene Gauthier**, finally made the decision that since I had earned my gold dolphins I no longer had to hot bunk. That was a big step in my career. The experience of our Northern run in 1958 as well as our other voyages to strange and exotic (and sometimes not so exotic) places cannot be duplicated and are the material that great sea stories are made from.

Thank you Phil for the magnificent Bang Gang Newsletter that you have produced for these many years. You have been the "Glue" that has held the crew together. I do not think that you will ever know how much the recipients of your efforts are appreciated and how much we look forward to finding the latest news about some of the best friends that we have ever had in our lives.

I wish each and every one of you the best that life has to offer. I am proud to have served with you and even more proud to be able to call you friends and shipmates. The things that we did as young (and not so young) men while serving our country may fade from the memories of some, but we were part of the magnificent group of men that demonstrated that the United States was, and always will be, the greatest country in the world. Remember the wonderful times that you had as a sailor and make sure that you pass this information and your love of country on to future generations.

I call my home in Palm Beach Gardens, FL "Larry's Bed and Breakfast" because it is always open and I welcome my former shipmates who would like to spend a few hours or a few days with me in the event that they are ever in the Palm Beach area. The sun is warm and the beer is cold. Who could ask for a better combination.

May you all have a future filled with Fair Winds and Following Seas."....*Larry, thank you for the kind words. Since your kids put the squash on your traveling, maybe we can bring the Reunion to you. Just how big is Larry's Bed and Breakfast???*

Lenny Sciuto, a QuarterMaster (69-71), "This started coming together as I was flying home from the reunion. I have written things before. A series of children's books called "Uncle Benny Bunny Books" are in illustration right now and I hope to find a publisher after that. I am also researching data for a novel about the Coast Guard.

*As my plane lifted into the air, it banked north and homeward. The earth fell below its wings in the late morning sun. Upward it flew, allowing me to scan the horizon and see the homes and buildings intertwined with the brown, yellow, orange and even green hues of fall. It was a beautiful sight to behold. As I looked below, at the ever widening landscape, a group of words came into my mind. The words I heard and remembered, in awe, so many times before. Their special meaning representing four hundred years of a nation's people resolved to them. Those words reaffirming the people's ever deepening refusal to be denied. **O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.***

How fortunate, we all are to be Americans. But we, my shipmates and I, were and are more than that. When young, we were warriors. We were the best of the best. We were U.S. Navy Submarine sailors. We spanned more than sixty years of service to our country. We traversed World War II, the Korean War, the Viet Nam war, Desert Shield and Storm and multiple wars in the Middle East. For thirty five years, we sailed on and under the oceans of the earth. We came from all walks of life, and from every state in the Union. We had different educational levels, different ethnic backgrounds and even different religious beliefs. Some of us were single and some were married. But we all had one commonality: a 306.5 foot, diesel submarine named the USS BANG (SS-385).

For a few days, this October, we were able to transcend time and be BANG sailors again. Some of us are heavier. Some of us are balding. Most of us are wrinkled and gray. Many of us are gone to fairer winds and seas, on final patrol. But our love of country, and our caring for each other, still deeply burns within us all. At the reunion, we talked about the years past. We remembered events, while on board BANG, that had special meaning to us. We laughed and joked about the "sea stories". We reminisced of patrols to foreign lands. And as I listened and talked to shipmates from World War II to 1972 (when BANG was decommissioned and sent to Spain), a realization came to me. We all agreed that she was a good submarine. But, all in all, she was just that: a submarine. What made her a good boat were the crews, spanning from 1943 until 1972. In her history, there was not a bad crew aboard her. Every crew, from every generation and decade, was a good crew. Every crew contributed to her history, her legacy and her legend. Those crews made her special. Those crews made her a good boat. That fact made us all special. It made us BANG sailors.

With the loss of my wife, this year, I have become more philosophical. I have become more patient and tolerant. I ponder the future. I ponder the remaining life's challenges. I tend to be more melancholy. But one thing I am happy about. I made the decision to attend this year's reunion. I needed to attend this year's reunion. The reunion reminded me, and reaffirmed in me, that I am part of a group of men, spanning decades, who value their time in the Submarine Service; but more importantly, their time on BANG and their time together, as shipmates. Yes, I want you to know that I am special. But so are you. No one can ever change who we are. We are, forever, BANG sailors.

Note: It's my sincere wish that more of us BANG sailors attend next year's reunion in New London, CT. Let's all "pull" together to find them and help to get them there.".... Thanks for the article Len. Very well written. Glad to hear that you enjoyed the reunion and are looking forward to next year's already. Like most of us, once you attend one your hooked for life.

Dallas Dixon, a MachinistMate (62-65), "I have written and published a novel titled **Miss Nancy: June 5, 1964 to September 13, 1964**. It is now available at www.rosedogbookstore.com. It is listed on their website under fiction/mystery/crime/suspense/horror, or you can search their site by using author's name or book name. You will be able to see the front cover, plus read about the author and about the story. The novel took me three years and seven months to complete. I have dedicated the book to my wife and our family as well as to my brothers of the Silent Service. USS Bang's name is on the back cover. I would appreciate any help you could give me to get the word out. I would like to see one of my books on each submarine in the U.S. Navy. Thanks for your time.Dallas, congratulations on your book publishing. Another BANG shipmate turned author. All those long times at sea must have had something to do with it.



Harry Ross identified the two melon eaters as **Jerry Casebolt**, FTG (64-65) and **Hugh Rowley**, CS (62-65) who was killed along with his parents while they were driving home from New London after he had been discharged.

Dan All, an ElectronicsTech (58-59), "Please start sending the newsletter by email again and save the postage. Shirley and I are doing ok. It is hard to believe we have been in Florida for over 5 years."....
Dan, happy to hear that you and Shirley are OK. And, thanks for getting back on the e-mail list.

Richard Barringer, a SONarman (52-55 ComCrew3), Well, the past two months have been hectic. First my oxygen levels were too low so they decided I needed to start carrying around an oxygen tank. Next was a stress test and the results showed blockage in upper artery to heart. They put me on a nitro patch but said if that doesn't help, then possibly angiogram, angioplasty, stent in artery, or by-pass surgery. In the meantime, more blood work and an echocardiogram.

My lungs are clear.....imagine that after 40+ years of smoking!!! I have been scheduled for the Angioplasty on 12/11. After all that, I can get back to raising hell and being able to do things without chest pain and shortness of breath. I am looking forward to this procedure and have no qualms about it. I know it is for the best. Looks like Sierra Trek will be back at Meadow Lake in 2010." ...*Dick, welcome to Plavix world. Cuts may bleed a little longer and bruises may come easier but you CAN LIVE with that.*

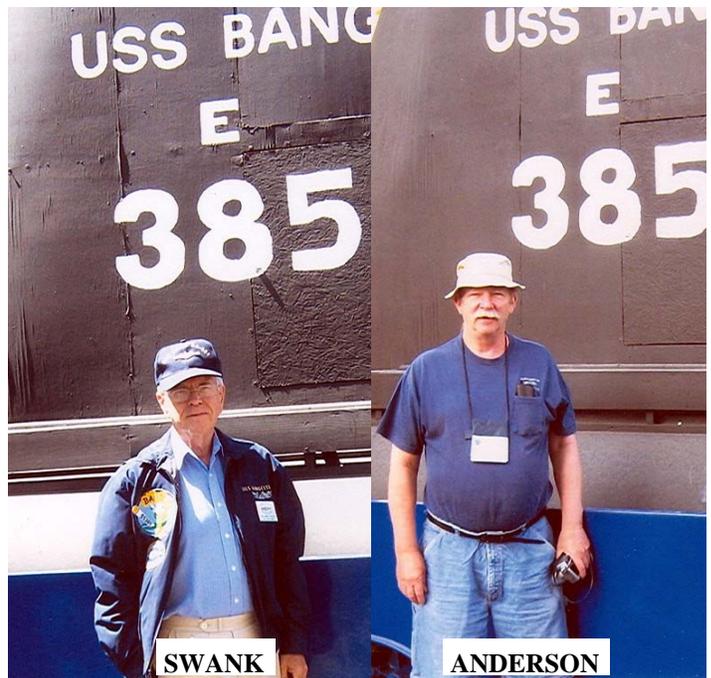
Bill Furnholm, an Engineman (51 ComCrew2), "In regards to the whereabouts of former shipmate **Max Hemsley** asked by **Cornelius Tierney** (54-56), I regret to inform you he passed away in 2007. At the time he was living in Murrells Inlet S.C.

Max and I were dear friends. We had served on three different boats together. USS Blower SS325, USS Bang SS385, and USS Trigger SS 564. I never had a better shipmate than old Max. Max did 20 years in the Navy and retired as an E8 or E9 - I'm not sure which. Max and I were part of the recommissioning crew in 51. I served aboard Bang for two years plus at which time I volunteered for new construction, USS Trigger. At that time Max was serving on USS Trutta and he also requested assignment to Trigger. We served together for about three years, both of us getting married during that period and with varying career paths never served together again. I want to congratulate you again for the outstanding job you do on the Bang Gang news letter."....*Thank you, Bill, for the update on Max. I am sorry that we could not have located him sooner so that he too would have been able to enjoy the Newsletter.*



Frank Walker writes that the 2009 San Diego Convention was a success as was our parade float. Besides himself, the following BANG shipmates were in attendance:

John Anderson, Ray Wilgeroth, Ed Kracker, Dan Rosenfeld, Bob Swank.



USS BANG (SS385) MEMORIAL SITES

"Keeping The Memory Alive"



- Albacore Park - Portsmouth, NH - Tree and Engraved Ground Marker
- Battleship Park - Mobile, AL - Engraved Walkway Brick
- Mathis Plaza Waterfront Park - S. Toms River, NJ - Engraved Walkway Brick
- Deterrent Park - Silverdale, WA - Engraved Walkway Brick
- Veterans Memorial Park - Pensacola, FL - Submarine Lifeguard League Memorial Stone
- Idaho Science Center - Arco, ID - Engraved Bronze Plaque @ Hawkbill Memorial
- Veterans Freedom Memorial - Tampa, FL - Engraved Walkway Brick
- USS Lapon Memorial Sail - Springfield, MO - Engraved Walkway Brick
- Clarion Hotel - Charleston, SC - Framed Trilogy Drawing on Lobby Wall
- New Mexico Vets Memorial - Albuquerque, NM - Engraved Walkway Brick
- Nimitz WWII Museum-Fredericksburg, TX - Brass Plaque on Memorial Courtyard Wall
- USSVI San Diego Base-CA - Parade Float carrying model of BANG sail



BANG VIDEOS NOW ON SALE!



**NO
SALE!!**

John Monroe is still offering these videos for sale:

- (1). 1993 Reunion in Portsmouth, NH.
- (2). 1994 Reunion in Portsmouth, VA.
- (3). A compilation of photos and 8mm film recording BANG's history throughout her Commissioned years and featured highlights of a 1970-1971 Med Cruise.

Though the source documents are vintage, the quality of the reproduction media is very good.

John is offering these videos for \$20.00 each in either VHS tape or CD/DVD format. And, he will send a portion of the proceeds to our Slush Fund.

John also states that if you have difficulty playing the DVD recording on your player, call him and he will rectify the problem.

Anyone interested in purchasing any or all of these videos contact John by phone or mail at the following:

**1029 Bush St. Apt. B
Red Wing, MN 55066-3470
(651) 380-5358**

Folks, With all the hype going on now a days—Black Friday, Cyber Monday, etc., we decided to tone things down by just offering every day LOW PRICES. Please read fine print—> Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!!

All items will be sold by mail or at our Reunions. Send mail orders to **Phil Beals**.

Make your check payable to **USS BANG** and be sure to add a few bucks extra to cover the postage. All proceeds from these sales are deposited directly into our Slush Fund.

Navy Blue Ballcap - USS BANG SS385 embroidered in gold with silver dolphins and solid or mesh top.

Please state your choice.....\$8.00

BANG Photos - 40's, 50's, 60's 8x10 black & white as shown on back page.

Please state your choice.....\$3.00

Jacket Patches - 40's, 50's, 60's 5 inch in full color as shown on back page.

Please state your choice.....\$5.00

WWII Battle Flag Patch - 3x5 inch full color....\$5.00

1" Lapel/Hat pins - depicting above jacket patches & battle flag. **Please state your choice.....\$5.00**

REUNION UPDATE

2009



Greetings everyone! The 2009 USS Bang SS385 reunion is history and Ronnie and I want to take this opportunity to thank all, who were here in Virginia Beach enjoying it, from the bottom of our hearts for making it a great success. It made us feel so good to hear that all who attended were very satisfied and really had a good time.

We also wish to thank the Bang Gang for the beautiful flowers they sent us. We really appreciated receiving them.

The trips were well attended with full bus loads both days. The time spent at the Mariners' Museum was too short for most but all came away with a better understanding of just what went on during the battle the Monitor fought during the Civil War. The tour of Fort Monroe, too, was a wealth of information about the Civil War.

The MacArthur Memorial Museum not only houses all of his memorabilia and artifacts but his and Mrs. MacArthur's remains as well. I enjoy visiting this Museum because it is close to another of my favorite museums — DOUMAR'S!!!



We were a little apprehensive about how well the dinner cruise aboard the Spirit would be received by the attendees but that quickly dissipated when over 75 % of you signed up for it. Besides what could go wrong with **Stu & Sydney Savage** as king and

Queen of the dance floor.



Our Business Meeting ended with two important decisions made and approved by the attendees.

First, congratulations to our newly elected slate of Officers who will be presiding over the "Gang" for the next two years. Their names and responsibilities are listed on the front page of this Newsletter.

Second, congratulations to **Ralph & Claire Gates** and **Deane & Connie Hadfield** who have been selected to co-host next year's Reunion in New London, CT (9/27-10/1/2010). More info about this will be forth coming in future Newsletters.

Finally, our Banquet was special this year. Not because of the entertainment (which everyone seemed to enjoy) but, because of our Honored guests who were in attendance—**Robert & Marjorie Mathison** and what they brought with them.

Back in 1943, Robert Mathison's grandmother, Mrs. Robert W. Neblett, was chosen as Sponsor for the launching of USS BANG (SS385). His mother, Mrs. Virginia Mathison, was chosen as Maid Of Honor and stood beside her mother as she performed her duties by breaking a bottle of champagne across BANG's bow.

After the Christening, Mrs. Neblett was presented a gift from the PNS yard workers—a large engraved sterling silver bowl housed in a beautiful wood laminated box.



Robert & Marjorie Mathison

Robert Mathison presented that gift, along with supporting photographs to us. Here are his words:

“In August 1943 my grandmother launched your submarine, USS BANG, at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. My grandmother was chosen for this honor because her only son, an Army Air Force private, was captured by the Japanese and killed during the Bataan death march. His name was Robert Neblett - I was named after him. My family has served the submarine service and the Navy for 201 years. My wife and I both worked on nuclear submarines in the Radiological Control Office at Norfolk Naval Shipyard. My father was in the blacksmith shop and his father was the master of the gyrocompass shop. Our youngest son is currently serving in the Marine Corps as an air traffic controller and just returned from Iraq. My father in law spent 45 years specializing in submarine communications. My mother accompanied my grandmother to the BANG's launching. She stood by proudly as her mother christened the hull with champagne. During this ceremony, my grandmother was presented with a gift from the employees of the shipyard. This silver bowl is inscribed to Mrs. Robert W. Neblett on August 30th, 1943, and commemorates her sponsoring USS BANG. I am honored to give it to you as a gift from my family.”

Immediately after the presentation, we reciprocated by making Robert an honorary member of the “Gang”

Gene & Ronnie Lockwood

The attendees this year was a good mix of 50's and 60's shipmates. Along with the “Regulars” we had some first timers and some returnees who haven't attended in a while. Your Committee hopes you had a great time and that you will be joining us again next year in New London, CT. On the down side, the attendance of our WWII shipmates continues to dwindle as their ability to travel becomes more

restrictive. We miss these Shipmates dearly and will never forget what they have done for us.

The following is the ‘Sailing List’ of attendees:

1. **Paull & June Anderson (62-63)**
2. **Charles & Patricia Archer (62-65)**
3. **Luis Arellano (71-72)**
4. **Phil & Dot Beals (56-59)**
5. **Robert Bridle & Bette (67-70)**
6. **Fritz & Marlene Carlson (62-63)**
7. **Marv & JoAnn Christenson (56-58)**
8. **Ed & Annette Cirucci (71-72)**
9. **Ike Cohen (70)**
10. **Billy Cromie & Son (64-71)**
11. **Ed & Jane DeLong (63-66)**
12. **Eric & Sally Ericson (67-68)**
13. **Len Fagotti & Marilyn Barratt (63-66)**
14. **Bill & Joan Fenton (68-71)**
15. **Richard & Elizabeth Gahan (58-62)**
16. **Ralph & Claire Gates (65-67)**
17. **Don Gotta (62-65)**
18. **Bob & Betty Gunny (44-45)**
19. **Deane & Connie Hadfield (57-60)**
20. **Charlie & Marjorie Heater (52-55)**
21. **James Herward (64-71)**
22. **Tom & Rose Hill (68-69)**
23. **Charles Kimball (53-55)**
24. **Jim & Yolanda Klein (64-66)**
25. **Ed & June Kracker (43-45)**
26. **John & Darlene Kraft (68-70)**
27. **Ben Laporte (57-60)**
28. **Dale & Rosie Larson (55-57)**
29. **Joe & Marion Leonardi (57-59)**
30. **Gene & Ronnie Lockwood (65-71)**
31. **Al Mace (63-66)**
32. **Bill & Barbera Mancuso (54-58)**
33. **(Honored guests)**
34. **John Monroe (69-72)**
35. **Ed & Sandy Moran (60-62)**
36. **John O'Connor & Diane (64-67)**
37. **Gary Probst (56-59)**
38. **Ernie Raspe (62-63)**
39. **John & Terri Regish (56-58)**
40. **Harry & JoAnn Ross (64-66)**
41. **Stu & Sidney Savage (56-59)**
42. **Paul Schramm (70-71)**
43. **Lenny Sciuto (69-71)**
44. **Lamarr & Kathy Seader (62-65)**
45. **Lee & Alida Sivil (55-58)**
46. **Bill Smith (57-61)**
47. **Tom Steet (64-66)**
48. **Tom & Nancy Stewart (51-52) & Elaine**
49. **Wayne & Elaine Thalasinis (57-60)**
50. **Bob White (52-56) & Mildred Harper**
51. **Hal Wilkins (69-72)**
52. **Martin & Karen Wilson (69-71)**





Mrs. Neblett swinging champagne bottle.



Mrs. Neblett receiving gift from Mr. E. R. Anderson



Mrs. Virginia Mathison & mother, Mrs. Robert W. Neblett



**U.S. Submarine BANG
Launched August 30, 1943
SPONSOR
Mrs. Robert W. Neblett
Presented by
Employees of Navy Yard
Portsmouth, N.H.**



Top of Laminated box



Phil Beals accepting bowl from Robert Mathison



Silver bowl on top of box

PHIL BEALS, EDITOR
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2127 OAHU DRIVE
HOLIDAY, FL 34691-3625



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PRAISE OUR MILITARY! - AND PRAY FOR THEM TOO.

