



USSVI Thresher Base News

Thresher victim's remembered on 49th annual anniversary memorial service in Kittery

By Patrick Archambault, Foster's Daily Democrat

KITTERY, Maine — It was April 10, 1963 when Secretary to the Design Superintendent Rose Marie Dougherty received the ominous message from the USS Skylark, an above sea service vessel.

USS Thresher submarine was conducting sea trails off the coast of New England this day and the two ships were in communication by means of underwater sound telephone. About an hour after the USS Thresher made its deep sea decent, the USS Skylark forwarded a message from the depths of the Atlantic Ocean to Dougherty, "We are experiencing minor difficulties."

After some garbled messages and difficulties in communicating, it was clear that the USS Thresher fell below the fatal crush depth and thus sank.

The 129 crew members aboard the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard-built USS Thresher when the submarine sank now rest in peace, with the ocean as their graves. 49 years later, about 250 former crew members, shipyard workers, families members and community members gather at the R.W. Traip Academy gymnasium at 1 p.m. Saturday for the 49th Anniversary Memorial Service to honor their loved ones aboard the USS Thresher that day. The ceremony, which began with both the

Pledge of Allegiance and the national anthem, had Vice Admiral Kevin M. McCoy, USN, as the keynote speaker.

The ceremony contained a bell tolling where the 129 crewmen were remembered, prayers, a wreath laying and a gun salute for the crew members.

Dougherty, a seacoast resident for 46 years, has been to nearly all of the ceremonies and was present this one. "The Portsmouth Shipyard was so proud of the Thresher because of how advanced it was," she said.

Joy MacMillian, a speaker during the ceremony, is the daughter of USS Thresher's Chief Radioman Walter J. Noonis who was present at the time of the sinking.

"I was 6 years old on April 10, 1963. As I grew, so did my perception that

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Jack Gill on Eternal Patrol



John C. "Jack" Gill, 68, a Vietnam era veteran and retiree of Verizon, died Friday morning, April 20, at the Parkland Medical Center in Derry, after being stricken at his home Saturday afternoon. He was the beloved and devoted husband of Audrey (Kliska) Gill, with whom he celebrated 42 years of marriage last September.

He was born and raised in Lawrence, MA, son of the late John C. and Marguerite Gill. Upon graduation from Central Catholic High School he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, Submariners Corps. He qualified and received his dolphins aboard the USS Diablo. He also served on the USS Agler, and the USS Dogfish, and was honorably discharged as an EM3 SS. He was a member of Sub Veterans club Thresher Base, Portsmouth, NH, the Groton, CT, sub veterans club and National USSVI

He began his 43 year career with New England Telephone and Tele-

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Base Happenings



Base Commander's Message



Shipmates,

The 49th USS Thresher Memorial Service was a moving tribute to the men lost aboard USS Thresher., as well

as an appropriate segway to the 50th. Thank you to all who assisted with making this service heart felt to those in attendance.

Planning is underway for the 50th. Vice Admiral McCoy notified me that he hand carried the invitation to the CNO. Former Thresher Base Commander Gary Hildreth is leading an exploratory search for a suitable location that will hold the estimated 1000 attendees.

Kudos to Former Base Commander Tom Young, Secretary Robert McAlpine and Eagle Scout Coordinator Al Page for representing Thresher Base by joining up with Marblehead Base at the Lexington Patriots Day Parade.

Our next event after the May meeting is Thresher Base's Memorial Day

Service that will held at Albacore Park. Join us in remembering all those who gave their lives for our great nation.

Please join us in honoring our WWII SubVets and Holland Club Inductees at the July joint WWII SubVets & Thresher Base Lobster Fest and Holland Club Ceremony.

Our prayers go out to Audrey, wife of Thresher Base member John (Jack) Gill, EM3(SS) who departed on silent patrol. Sailor rest your oar - your wonderful presence will be missed.

At your service,
Kevin

Jack Gill (continued from page 1)

graph and stayed with the company as it changed to Verizon. He retired in 2007 as a rated line and cableman, and Contract Work Inspector. Jack was a member of IBEW Union Local 2321.

He enjoyed travelling and they had just returned from wintering in North Myrtle Beach last week where he was a member of the Grand Strand, Palmetto Route Train Club. Jack devoted his life to his family, and was a constant companion to the many pets he had over the years.

He is survived by his wife Audrey, his sons, Sean of Durham, NH, and Jay and his wife Kristen of Medford, MA, and several cousins.

Thresher Service (continued from page 1)

daddy was not ever coming back. Over the last 49 years of these ceremonies, roses are the central flower that comes to mind. Roses were given to survivors as symbols of our strength," she said in her attention grabbing speech.

She went on to read a poem about the tragic beauty between roses and their thorns and closed the speech by

saying, "I hold my rose proudly and remember you daddy Jack."

Kevin Galeaz, who served in the Navy from 1975 to 1982 as a Ballistic Missile Fire Control Technician, is a member of the United States Submarine Veterans Inc. for the Thresher Base in Portsmouth and was reader during the bell tolling.

He said his involvement in the organization is to facilitate its purpose, "to perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties."

Next year will be the 50th anniversary for which Galeaz is expecting 1,000 people to be present.

Thresher Base Charter

USSVI Thresher Base was chartered on 15 November 1989 in the memory of those 129 gallant men who at 9:17 AM on 10 April 1963 lost their lives in the performance of their duties aboard USS THRESHER (SSN 593).

Our mission is "to perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States Government."

Newsletter Information

The base newsletter, *Thresher Base News*, is published 6 times a year to inform the membership and community about meeting happenings and upcoming events. All members are welcome to submit non-political articles for inclusion in an upcoming issue. Send submissions to Kevin Galeaz, Editor, 1465 Hooksett Road #239, Hooksett, NH 03106 or thresherbase@comcast.net.

Memorial Day Service

Albacore Park

Monday, May 28

1000



March 2012 Meeting Minutes



Call meeting to order by Maine Base Commander, Larry Ferrell, followed by the reading of the Creed of USSVI then the by Pledge of Allegiance was performed

Moment of Silence Tolling of the Bell for Boats on Eternal Patrol in: February and March

Prayer Lead by: Maine Base Chaplin, Terry Schmidt

Sound Off and Introduction of Guests: Several Members of Rhode Island Base, members of the Will Rodgers crew working on their reunion to take place April 2013 were introduced.

Gerry Mylroie and Don Kerr (Kittery Memorial Circle Committee) were introduced.

Reading of the last meeting minutes: This was difficult under the conditions and ended up being short. A motion was made to accept the minutes, Seconded and passed.

Treasures Report:

Balance 1/21/12	\$4,134.38
Deposits	\$450.70
Expenses	\$160.00
Balance 3/17/12	\$4,425.08

Old Business -

Base Commander Galeaz went over preparations for the upcoming 49th Thresher Memorial Service.

New Business

Base Commander spoke w/ regards to planning for the 50th Thresher Memorial Service.

After individual base meetings, the Kittery Planning Committee reps

presented the Memorial Circle Project to the Maine Base and Thresher Base members.

Note: The environment didn't lend itself to a formal meeting and was hard to conduct business as usual.

Tom Shannon, Eastern USSVI District Commander, officially swore in the Maine Base Officers and Thresher Base Officers to their respective offices in a group format.

Thresher Base Officers:

Base Commander - Kevin Galeaz
 Vice Commander - Richard Cecchetti
 Secretary - Robert McAlpine
 Treasurer - Dennis O'Keefe

Motion to adjourn by Maine Base Commander, Larry Ferrell



Member Birthdays

May

- 5 - Snow Snow
- 6 - Bob Anderson
- 6 - Roy Pierce
- 24 - John Trubee
- 26 - Donald Scanlon
- 31 Bob Miller

- 11 - Michael Gaughan
- 12 - Stanley Thurston
- 13 - Dick Blachford
- 13 - Charles Manes
- 17 - Donald Baker
- 21 - George Horne
- 22 - Tom Nalway
- 24 - Errol Chase
- 25 - Norm Gilmore
- 27 - Roland Miller
- 27 - Chuck Strand

June

- 1 - Richard Seedner
- 3 - Frank Reinhold
- 4 - Roger Babcock

Groton Boat Tour

The Marblehead Base had such overwhelming positive feedback about these boat tours that they will be conducting them on all 3 Saturdays: April 28, May 19 and June 9. It was decided at the January meeting that Thresher Base will put together a group for June 9. Lookout for more details in the upcoming months.



Eagle Scouts Court of Honor



**William Conte II, Ryan Guest
and Zach Sheltra**

Hampstead Congregational Church, Hampstead, NH

Daniel K. Stacey

Camp Carpenter, Manchester, NH



On Saturday May 5, Former Thresher Base Commander Tom Young and Thresher Base member Al Page presented Eagle Scout certificates to William Conti !!, Ryan Guest and Zach Sheltra during the Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Troop 33 Hampstead, NH at the Hampstead Congregational Church. Tom spoke of how and why submarine veterans are interested in Eagle Scouts and presented the certificates that are signed by National Commander T. Michael Bircumshaw and Thresher Base Commander Kevin Galeaz.

On Sunday, May 13, Al Page and Kevin Galeaz presented Daniel with a USSVI Certificate of Recognition of Outstanding Achievement. On the fireplace mantel are drawings of Daniel's Eagle Scout Project - he designed and built a Veteran's Memorial at the Pine Cemetary in Salem. Daniel's grandfather, Francis Joseph Stacey, served aboard the SS Puffer, SS Tuna, SS Nautilus, SS Croaker, SS Angler, SS Cutlass, SS Shad, SS Balao, AS15 Bushnell and SS Amberjack.



Partriot's Day Parade



April 16, 2012

Bob McAlpine, Tom Young and Al Page represented Thresher Base at Lexington, MA's annual Patriot's Day Parade with Marblehead Base.





To Perpetuate the Memory



Burnett Michael Shotwell was born on August 19, 1942, in Morristown, N.J., the son of Mr. and Mrs. Burnett E. Shotwell of Red Bank, N.J.

He attended the River Plaza Grammar School and the Middletown Township High School in Middletown Township, N.J. While in high school, Burnett was a member of the Field and Stream Club and the Math Club. He was particularly fond of outdoor sports, especially water



Burnett Michael Shotwell
Electronics Technician Seaman
United States Navy

sports. Burnett also developed an early interest in electronics and had built his own radio transmitter while in high school, as well as other type radio equipment.

Upon graduating from high school in June 1960, Burnett enlisted in the Navy and received his basic training at the U.S. Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Ill. Burnett was then selected to attend the Navy's Electronics Technician School. He was graduated on April 14, 1961,

and volunteered for submarine duty. Completing submarine basic training at the U.S. Naval Submarine School, New London, Conn., Burnett underwent further training at the Guided Missile School, Dam Neck, Va. Following graduation, he was then assigned to the nuclear-powered submarine U.S.S. Thresher (SSN 593).

Burnett is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Burnett E. Shotwell of Red Bank, N.J.; a brother, Leonard Shotwell, and his godfather, Mr. Irwin Thompson, a longtime resident of the Shotwell household

Alan Dennison Sinnett was born on February 12, 1934, in Boston, Mass., where he lived and attended school prior to entering the Navy. He attended Benjamin Dean and Thomas N. Hart Schools in South Boston, and South Boston High School. During his school years he was a member of the Boy Scouts, and a member of the Boys' Club of South Boston. His hobbies were swimming, skin-diving and photography. While a member of the Boys' Club, Alan was awarded several trophies for his swimming feats.

Alan enlisted in the Navy on June 29, 1951, and after completing his recruit training he was assigned to the destroyer U.S.S. Noa (DD 841). He later served in the attack transport U.S.S. Telfair (APA 210), the repair ship U.S.S. Ajax (AR 6) and the U.S.S. Markab (AR 23), prior to volunteering for submarine duty. Completing

basic training at the Submarine School at New London, Conn., Alan was assigned to the submarine U.S.S. Balao (SS 285). While serving in Balao, he qualified as a submariner, and was awarded his silver dolphins.

A graduate of the Navy's Fire Control Technician's School, Alan, was ordered to the submarine Thresher, on April 4, 1963. During his naval service, Alan

earned the Good Conduct Medal with three stars in lieu of three awards, the United Nations Service Medal, Korean Service Medal, Navy Occupation Service Medal with European Clasp, and the National Defense Medal.

Alan is survived by his widow, the former Mary de Lauri, and two children, Alan Dean and Lauren Gail. He also leaves his parents, Mr.

and Mrs. George L. Sinnett of South Weymouth, Mass., and a sister, Edith E. Nest of Biddeford, Maine.



Alan Dennison Sinnett
Fire Control Technician, Second Class
United States Navy



Annual Lobsterbake and Holland Club Induction



Saturday, July 21, 2012 @ 1200

American Legion Post #70

Raymond D. Walton Road

Seabrook, NH

Menu Options & Cost

Single lobster, steamed clams, chowder & corn on the cob for \$20 p/p.

- or -

Double lobsters, steamed clams, chowder & corn on the cob for \$25 p/p.

- or -

Steak with baked potato for \$20 p/p.

Invitation List

U.S. SUBVETS WWII, Associates, Wives and Guests.

USSVI SUBVETS, Wives and Guests.

Reservations

Reservations with payment are required by Saturday, July 14.

Mail check made out to USSVI Thresher Base with menu selection to:

Thresher Base Secretary Bob McAlpine

3 Sterling Hill Lane, # 343 Exeter NH 03833-4872

603-772-3272 (Home)

ermcalpine@comcast.net

Directions

Take Rt. 95 to NH Exit 1, Rt. 107 East. Proceed to Rt. 1, and turn right heading South. Continue to Traffic Circle completing 3/4 of the circle. Turn right onto Walton Rd. and proceed for ~ 1/2 mile. The Raymond D. Walton American Legion Post #70 is located on the left. If you need more directions call the American Legion at 603.474.8387



USS Thresher Memorial Service



Former USS Thresher crew member, Fern Wagner, shared his memories of his time aboard Thresher and his shipmates.



Keynote speaker -
Vice Admiral
Kevin McCoy



Cathy Beal, daughter of Daniel Beal Jr., represented the Thresher families as she threw out the remembrance wreath.

THRESHER Base
United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.
c/o Kevin Galeaz
1465 Hooksett Road #239
Hooksett, NH 03106

Next Thresher Base Meeting
Saturday, May 19 @ 1200
Newick's • Dover Point Road • Dover, NH

2012 Calendar of Events

May

19 - 1200 - Base Meeting - Newick's
28 - 1000 - Memorial Day Service at
Albacore Park

June

9 - TBD - Groton Boat Tour with
Marblehead Base

July

21 - 1200 - Base Meeting/Lobster-
bake at Seabrook Legion

September

2 to 9 - USSVI Convention, Norfolk,
VA
15 - 1200 - Base Meeting at Newick's

November

17 - 1200 - Base Meeting - TBD

USSVI Conventions

2012

September 2 to 9
Norfolk, VA

2013

August 25 to September 2
Rochester, MN