



USSVI Thresher Base News



November 2004

Thresher Base Mourns the Loss of Three Members

Richard Godbout

Dick passed away on Monday, October 18 after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was born in Haverhill, MA on January 7, 1930 and resided in Atkinson, NH since 1963. He was educated in Nashua



and graduated from Nashua High School. He served in the US Navy during the Korean War where he attained the rate of Torpedoman 1st Class Petty Officer. He was employed for 33 years with the US Postal Service, Haverhill office until his retirement in 1985.

He was past commander of Thresher Base for 2 years. He was also a member of the Portsmouth American Legion Post and Auxiliary member of the WWII Sub Vets.

He is survived by his wife, Kathryn, two stepdaughters, five grandchildren, two sisters and a brother.

His funeral services were held on October 21 at the Linnehan and Son Funeral Home followed by his interment at the Atkinson Cemetery.

Memorials can be made to the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, 10 Brookline Place West, Floor 6, Brookline, MA 02445 or the Merrimack Valley Hospice, 360 Merrimack St., Lawrence, MA 01843.

Robert Bellisle Sr.

Bob passed away on Monday, November 8 just two weeks after the passing of his son, Robert Jr.

Bob was born in Lawrence, MA in November 1930. He attended local schools and graduated from Lawrence High School in 1949.

Bob's experience with the Navy started while still in high school. He joined the Naval Reserve in November, 1947 and served for almost two years. Bob enlisted in the US Navy and started boot camp in October 1949 in Com-



pany 288 at Great Lakes Naval Training Station. Following boot camp he attended Radar and Combat Information Center Schools at Norfolk before being assigned to USS Maury AGS 16, an oceanographic and survey ship. Just after he reported aboard Maury departed for ten months in the Persian Gulf.

On returning to the USA he was transferred to USS Hyades AF28. Hyades was a provision store-ship whose primary mission was provisioning the

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Keith McCall

Keith passed away on Tuesday, October 19 after

a lengthy battle with cancer. He was born on January 15, 1932 in Wetmore, Kansas. He graduated from Wetmore High School and

received a B.S. from Roosevelt University and a Master's degree from the University of New Hampshire. Keith served 20 years with the Navy, during the Korean and Vietnam Wars and held the rank of master chief petty officer. He and Stu Macgregor served together on the Triton.

After retiring from the Navy, Keith

worked for the New Hampshire Department of Education and was director at the Skill Center in Manchester, NH. He was a member and past president of the Vincent de Paul Society at Saint Patrick's Church.

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Commander's Message

With this crisp fresh November weather it sure does make you feel good to be in New England. The leaves are changing and a thought of the upcoming holiday season makes one happy to be right here at the core of the four seasons.



I'm not sure how many of you attended the annual USSVI convention in Saratoga, but if you missed out, I have a scrapbook of media coverage that was sent to me by my aunt and uncle who are life long residents of the area. I will bring it to the next meeting to share with all. It looks like the local media generously recognized the service of us Submariners, as there appeared to be excellent coverage from the press. I'm confident that Kevin and Robin will expound on my thoughts, as they represented Thresher Base and attended the convention. I am looking forward to hearing about their trip, as I am sure the rest of you are.

At our September meeting we discussed the possibility of a joint meeting in January with our WWII shipmates followed with a potluck dinner afterwards. This will enhance our Holland Club Ceremony and recognition of those individuals qualified for over fifty years. I am looking forward to this, as again, it is the fellowship of you guys that brings me back to the meetings and keeps me involved. I think we had a pretty good showing last year and hope we can repeat the same this year. Mark your calendars, as our Holland Club members deserve this.

Speaking of well deserves, Admiral Select McCoy has done a superb

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USSVI Convention is a Great Success

The Saratoga Base should be congratulated for their effort with this year's convention. From the moment you arrived in Saratoga you felt welcomed by the Saratoga Springs business community with open arms. A beautiful floral display was created in the town park surrounding a large pair of dolphins.

There were many activities held throughout the week with the annual meeting taking place on Saturday.



Bob and Mary Flannery visit with Bill and Betty Burns while waiting for the parade to start. Bob and Bill served together aboard the USS Entemedor (SS 340).



Charlie Manes and Jack McNally preparing to march in the parade.

The parade was scheduled for Saturday and the weather was of great concern. But it would not be a factor as just moments before the parade started, the skies dried up and the sun started to appear allowing the parade to go off without a hitch. It was an impressive sight seeing so many bases, mini subs and sub school students marching down Main Street.

The convention center facilities were incredible. The banquet, held on Saturday night, was a sell out. All attendees were greeted by a beautiful dolphin ice sculpture.

USSVI Dues Increase

There is still time to take advantage of paying your 2005 dues at 2004 rates. If you wish to take advantage of this offer, send in \$20 to Roy Pierce, P.O. Box 44, Woodstock, NH 03293-0044, prior to January 1, 2005. Roy says it would be a big help, if all annual members send in their renewals now. Thresher Base Life Members dues are still \$10. Members may want to consider becoming Life Members and taking advantage of the 2004 rate.

Gerald Mclees Hospitalized

Chief Gerald Mclees injured his back this summer moving a propane tank. This injury put him in the hospital in mid-October and his daughter hoped he would make it home within a month. While in the hospital, Gerald turned 90 years old. We wish him a speedy recovery. Here is his address if you would like to send him a get well card:

Chief Gerald Mclees
75 Ruby Road
Porsmouth, NH 03801

Bellisle (continued from page 1)

Sixth Fleet. In his year on Hyades they made twelve Atlantic crossings.

Early in 1952 the Navy was expanding the radar picket submarine program and was looking for rated Radarmen. Bob had attained RD2 so he volunteered, was sent to New London for submarine school and then to USS Burrfish SSR 312. He served on Burrfish until discharge in August 1954. He attained RD1 and qualified in submarines while serving on Burrfish.

On discharge Bob worked for New England Telephone Co as a central office installation technician for thirty-two years, retiring in 1987 as a Network Manager. Bob continued his education after the Navy at UMass-Lowell for electrical engineering and later at Hesser College for a Business Management degree. After retirement Bob started Belle Isle Travel Service in Hampstead, N.H.

He was a member and past president and District Governor for

New Hampshire of the Lions Clubs International. In addition, he was a Third Degree member of the Knights of Columbus, a Life Member of the Telephone Pioneers, a member of American Legion Post 48 in NH and a member of Navy League. Bob became involved with USSVI in 1993 when invited to join. He became a member of Thresher Base and served as Commander from 1999 to 2002.

He is survived by his wife Lillian, a son, two daughters and ten grandchildren.

His funeral was held on Friday, November 12 at St. John the Evangelist Church, Hudson. Bob was cremated and will have a burial at sea. Memorials in his name may be made to: Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation of N.H., P.O. Box 970, Concord, NH 03302-0970, or the New Hampshire Services to Man Kind, Inc., P.O. Box 543, Farmington, NH 03835.

McCall (continued from page 1)

He was also a member of the Fleet Reserve Association; USSVI Thresher Base; Disabled American Veterans and the American Legion Post 79.

He is survived by his wife Margaret, his son and daughter and four grandchildren.

He was unable to attend meetings recently due to glaucoma, but he kept in touch with the meetings and his wife, Margaret would read the newsletters and American Submariner to him when it became difficult for him to do so.

His funeral was held on Friday, October 22 at Saint Patrick's Church in Manchester. Burial with full military honors took place at the New Hampshire Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen.

Memorial donations can be made to Visiting Nurse and Home Hospice Association, 1850 Elm Street, Manchester, NH 03104 or St. Vincent de Paul Society, c/o St. Patrick Church, 138 Coolidge Ave, Manchester, NH 03102.

Commander's Message (continued from page 2)

job at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and is now moving onto bigger challenges. This Wednesday, October 13th, Admiral Select McCoy will step down as Shipyard Commander in a traditional Change of Command Ceremony and Captain Jonathan Iverson will take over the helm. Admiral Select McCoy has been a huge proponent of our Thresher Memorial services and I would like to thank him for all his support to Thresher Base this past three years. He has been a true friend to the community and all veterans. Captain Iverson comes to the Seacoast area from Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and we at Thresher Base would like to extend a warm welcome to him and his family.

Unfortunately friends, I have to end on a sad note. October and Novem-

ber has seen the passing of a number of our shipmates. Past Thresher Base Commander Dick Godbout and past Thresher Base Commander Bob Bellisle's oldest son, Bob Jr. both lost their battles with cancer. We knew of their struggles, and today they are both with peace and in a better place. We also lost shipmate Keith McCall. Due to illness Keith was unable to attend our meetings but his wife said that his thoughts were with us. Probably the most shocking, at least to me, is past Thresher Base Commander Bob Bellisle's reporting aboard for Eternal Patrol. Since I assumed the duties as Thresher Base Commander, Bob has always been there to guide me and provide a sage sounding board for my thoughts and questions. He was a wise man that loved his time spent in submarines

and touched each and every one of us. I will truly miss him, as he was a key player in our Thresher Memorial service, Albacore Park Memorial Day service, the annual Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Submarine Birthday Ball, and a great friend. All these men will be sorely missed and our thoughts and prayers are with their families, as today their Submariners have reached their final duty station and are on Eternal Patrol under the leadership of the Supreme Commander.

Be safe and I'll see you at our next meeting.

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BAE SYSTEMS



To Perpetuate the Memory



Edgar Solon Bobbitt was born on December 3, 1939, in Jefferson, Texas. He attended elementary school in Jefferson and Bruni, Texas, and was graduated from Midland High School in June 1958.

Active in all outdoor sports, he excelled in baseball and received a scholarship to Texas Technological College at Lubbock, Texas,



**Edgar Solon Bobbitt
Electrician's Mate Second Class
United States Navy**

which he entered in 1958. Edgar enlisted into the naval service at Odessa, Texas, in March 1960. He completed his basic training at the U.S. Naval Training Center, San Diego, California, and attended the Navy's Electrician's Mate School. In late September, Edgar volunteered for submarine duty and was enrolled

in the Submarine School at the U.S. Naval Submarine Base, New London,

Connecticut. His first assignment was in the submarine U.S.S. Sea Owl (SS 405), where he became qualified as a submariner and was awarded his silver dolphins. Edgar was selected for advance training in nuclear power and successfully completed the course of instruction at the submarine base and at Windsor Locks, Connecticut. He was assigned to his first nuclear-powered submarine, U.S.S. Thresher (SSN 593) on January 29, 1963. Edgar had been awarded the Navy's Good Conduct Medal.

He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. James A. Bobbitt; a sister, Martha Jane, and a brother, James Ellis, all of Midland, Texas.

Gerald Charles Boster was born on August 16, 1941, in Shelbina, Missouri, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Stanton M. Boster, of St. Louis, Missouri.

He attended the Baden Elementary School in St. Louis, and was graduated from Beaumont High School. Prior to entering the Navy in January, 1960, he attended Rolla School of Mines and Metallurgy (Missouri University), where he was a member of the swimming team and of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity.

Gerald received his basic training at the U.S. Naval Training Center, San Diego, California, and later attended the Navy's Electrician's Mate School there. He volunteered for submarine duty, and upon being accepted, he was enrolled in the Submarine School at the U.S. Naval Submarine Base, New

London, Connecticut. He was assigned to his first submarine, the U.S.S. Halfbeak (SS 352), in which he became qualified as a submariner on September 14, 1961. Gerald was selected for advance training in

nuclear power, and received his training at the submarine base and at the nuclear-power training unity located



**Gerald Charles Boster
Electrician's Mate Third Class
United States Navy**

at Windsor Locks, Connecticut. He successfully completed the course of instruction on October 31, 1962, and in the following month he was assigned to the U.S.S. Thresher (SSN 593).

Gerald is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Stanton M. Boster of St. Louis; his identical twin brother, James M. Boster who is serving in the Navy aboard the nuclear-powered

cruiser, U.S.S. Long Beach (CGN 9).

September Meeting Minutes

The September meeting of Thresher Base was held at the Portsmouth VFW on September 18, 2004.

The meeting was called to order followed by a silent prayer and the pledge of allegiance. A sound off of all those present was conducted.

Secretary's report was not read. Kevin Galeaz, Base Secretary was representing Thresher Base at the annual USSVI Submarine Convention in Saratoga, NY.

Treasurer's Report was read by Roy Pierce and passed by the membership.

OLD BUSINESS

1) Memorial Garden at Albacore Park - Bill Seward discussed latest on funds for Landscape upgrade:
\$1,000.00 from SUBVETS WWII
\$250.00 from SUBVETS WWII Ladies Auxiliary
\$5,000.00 – approx. amount in Thresher Memorial Fund.

Discussed among members if we could possibly use some of the money in the Thresher Memorial Fund to assist with the landscape upgrade.
CPO Selectees and Chief Petty Of-

ficers from Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and Submarines in overhaul spent Saturday, September 11, 2004 grooming the grounds at Albacore Park. Bill Seward, Bill Tebo and Gary Hildreth visited the site to discuss project. A huge amount of work was accomplished by the Chief Petty Officers, but we still need professional assistance with the removal of trees. Green Art of Kittery has been contacted to make recommendations along with a cost estimate on landscape work that needs to be accomplished. Bill Seward has the lead on contacting Green Art. Discussion on using money from Thresher Memorial Fund was tabled until next meeting when more members will be present.

NEW BUSINESS

1) September is the month Thresher Base votes officers in, but due to low member turnout, Larry Oiler suggested that voting be tabled to November meeting. Membership agreed.
2) Larry Oiler made recommendation that we submit Thresher Base newsletter for Newsletter competition next year. Membership agreed. Larry will

contact Kevin Galeaz.

3) Gary Hildreth recommended that we have our 2004 Holland Club induction ceremony in conjunction with a combined USSVI and WWII Sub Vets meeting in January at Portsmouth VFW. It was suggested that we have a potluck afterwards to enjoy some fellowship. Membership agreed. As Holland Club committee chairman, Bob Bellisle is working the administrative inputs to National.

4) WWII Sub Vet Richard Eck passed away and is now on eternal patrol. Shipmate Roger Miller attended services and represented both USSVI and WWII Sub Vets.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

1) Bill Seward and Larry Oiler discussed the successes of USS VIRGINIA's Sea trials. It was overall thought that the VIRGINIA performed better than expected. Bob Bellisle shared his experience at the helm of the VIRGINIA Class steering and diving trainer at NAVSUBSCOL Groton, CT.

Meeting Adjourned.

Promoting USSVI Membership

The USSVI is a unique group for many reasons:

- Its composite membership of civilians and active duty personnel benefits not only the members themselves but the United States Navy as well.
- It enables veterans, no longer on active duty, to maintain an active interest in the Navy and Submarines.
- It provides the younger men with the fellowship, active encouragement and moral support of older, more experienced submariners.
- It provides the Navy with a pool of staunch, knowledgeable supporters interested in furthering the interests of the Navy in general and submarines in particular.

Since membership includes persons with first-hand knowledge of practically every phase of submarine development, the United States Submarine Veterans is an unsurpassed repository of submarine history and tradition. Its self-perpetuating nature ensures that this priceless heritage will be handed down intact through future generations of submariners.

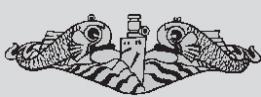
Membership application to join SUBVETS – Thresher Base can be obtained by contacting Larry Oiler, telephone (207) 656-5864, or by accessing the Thresher Base Web Site at <http://www.thresherbase.org/>. Only qualified submariners are eligible for regular membership, but our base has

provisions for Associate Membership. We strongly encourage those that are not qualified submariners, but who are related to the Submarine Service by their deeds or actions (i.e., shipyard employees, support contractors, etc.), to join as an Associate Member.

**Special Memorial
Donation to
be collected on
Saturday in
memory of
Dick Godbout,
Bob Bellisle and
Keith McCall.**

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

**Next Thresher Base Meeting
Saturday, November 20, 2004 @ 1300
Portsmouth VFW - Deer Street**



USSVI Thresher Base

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."

The base newsletter, *Thresher Base News*, and base website, www.thresher-base.org, are used to inform the membership and community about meeting happenings and upcoming events. Any member who has information to share with the membership is encouraged to submit articles to the editor for publishing. Send submissions to Kevin Galeaz, Editor, 1465 Hooksett Road #239, Hooksett, NH 03106 or webmaster@thresherbase.org.

**Upcoming
USSVI Conventions**

Here is a list of next five USSVI Conventions so you can start making plans to attend.

- 2005 - Kansas City**
- 2006 - Little Rock**
- 2007 - Alaska**
- 2008 - Dallas**
- 2009 - San Diego**