

# Hawgfish Scuttlebutt



Razorback Base  
United States Submarine Veterans

August, 2015

## A Brief History of Enlisted Rating Changes John C. Barr

There are no Radiomen in the Navy anymore – nor storekeepers or Torpedoman’s Mates. The Radioman rating was changed to Electronics Technician on submarines in 1997, and to Information Systems Technician in the surface fleet in 1999. Storekeepers became Logistics Specialists in 2010. Torpedoman’s Mates became Machinist’s Mates on submarines in 1997 and Gunner’s Mates in 2007 in the surface fleet. These are minor in comparison the changes and variations since 1775.

There are 9 ratings on submarines today: 13 if you count the 3 variations each of ET and MM. There are 57 ratings throughout the Navy today, 7 of which also have variations or specialties. From what I can find, there were only 2 “ratings” in use in the Continental Navy – Armorers and Boatswain’s Mates. Both were formally established in 1797 although the Armorer rating was disestablished in 1884.

The Continental Navy was disbanded after the American Revolutionary War (1783). Not until 1794 was a permanent standing Navy formed – interestingly as a response to threats by pirates to merchant shipping in the Mediterranean. Construction was authorized for 6 frigates over the next 20 years. In the late 1790s many new ratings were established. One of these was the Sailmaker’s Mate which should give some hint to the type of frigates in use. Other rates established at that time included Steward, Cook, Boy, Gunner’s Mate, Coxswain (changed to Coxswain in 1865), Carpenter’s Mate, Ordinary Seaman, Seaman, Master’s Mate, Cooper, Able Seaman and Master-at-Arms. Other supportive ratings such as Yeoman of the Gunroom, Captain’s Clerk, Gunner’s Yeoman and Boatswain’s Yeoman were created only to be disestablished in the mid-1800s. Interestingly the Yeoman’s rating was not formerly established until 1835.



Powder Monkey on board *USS New Hampshire* off Charleston, S.C., circa 1864.

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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 of America and its Constitution.



**Base**



**Commander**

**Shipmates,**

Everyone seemed to have a good time at the Travelers game last month (in spite of the heat).

To clear up a confusing issue that I inadvertently caused, there will be **NO** base meeting - short or otherwise – on August 15th. **The August meeting has been cancelled.** The next meeting will be held on the 4th Saturday in September on the 26th. The location of the meeting will be announced later. My apologies for any confusion.



**Fair Winds and following seas,**

**Jim**

**Jim Gates  
Base Commander**

## Eternal Patrol

### **Captain Robert R. Denis, USN (Ret.) “Bob”**

Of Toano, VA, formerly of Vienna, VA, passed away February 1, 2015. Bob was a member of the U.S. Naval Academy Class of '61 and a retired Director for Deloitte. He is survived by his wife Linda; daughters Melissa Jensen (Garth), Amanda Lawing (Chris) and four grandchildren; and brother Jerome. A memorial service, with inurnment at the *USNA Columbarium* was held at the *USNA Chapel* on April 29 at 10 a.m. Memorial contributions may be made to the *USNA Foundation Class of 1961 Fund*, 291 Wood RD., Annapolis MD 21402.

Bob served on the *SS-241, Bashaw, DSVs 0 and 1, Trieste I and Trieste II, SS-394, Razorback* (Nav & Ops, 1968-1970), *SS-568, Harder, CL-92, Little Rock* and *DD-825, Carpenter* as CO. He also served at PMS-395 (Deep Submergence Program Office), the Surface Warfare Development Group, the Surface Warfare Officers School and the Naval Safety Center. His service was from 1961 to 1988.



### **Commander Bruce John Schick, USN (Ret.)**

Bruce John Schick, 77, died May 3, 2015 at his home, Gold Mine Creek Farm in Louisa, Virginia. He grew up in Frederick, Maryland where he met his wife of 43 years, Patricia Heston. Bruce graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1959 and served 20 years in the Navy as a diesel submarine officer.

He qualified in submarines on the *USS Irex (SS-482)* in 1961, served aboard *USS Razorback (SS-394)* and *USS Volador (SS-490)*, CO of *USS Clamagore (SS-343)* 1974-76 and was a CDR when he retired from the Navy in 1979. Bruce wrote a book *WHALES TALES Recollections of a Diesel Submariner* which was published in 2007. Serving from 1959 to 1979 ending at the Defense Intelligence Agency, Bruce completed his career as an Assistant National Intelligence Officer for the CIA.

He and Pat moved to Louisa in 1986 where they raised cattle and volunteered with the Louisa County Agricultural Fair and Ducks Unlimited. Bruce was a member of St. James Episcopal Church. He also served Louisa County on the Industrial Development Authority and Comprehensive Plan Committee. Survivors include his sons John (Amy) of Louisa, Will (Sue) of Philadelphia, and Kurt (Lisa) of Harrisonburg, eight grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Bruce is also survived by a brother Bob (Dottie) of Virginia Beach. The family received friends at the farm, 2319 Goldmine Road, on Friday, May 15 from 5 until 7 p.m. A memorial service was held at St. James Episcopal Church at 11 a.m.

[Editor’s Note: Interesting that these two men served on four vessels that are now part of maritime museums.]



*(Continued from page 1.)*

The first vessel that can be considered a steam warship was the *Demologos*, which was launched in 1815 for the United States Navy. More were developed around the mid-1800s beginning with side-wheel paddlers and eventual screw driven ships. Many of the ratings established during this time of transition obviously were associated with the sailing vessels: Captain of the Mizzenmast established in 1835 but disestablished in 1893. (Not sure what this was but suspect he was the guy who unfurled sails at the top of the masts – no thanks!) Others were Captain of the Tops, Captain of the Forecastle, Captain of the Hold and Landsman which was apparently the lowest rank in the Navy at the time.



The “Jack-o’-the Dust” of *USS Scranton* in 1919.

Some of the “odder” names in this time included Powder Monkey – not an official designation but probably kin to the Armorer – carrying gunpowder from the magazines to the cannons. Loblolly Boy, in use in the late 1700s, young men who had the grim task of assisting surgeons by collecting amputated limbs and hauling tar buckets used for cauterizing wounds. One of my favorites is the Jack of the Dust established in 1876. Like today’s “mess cook,” he assisted the cooks with provisions and might often be covered with flour. Maybe it would have also applied to the Coal Heaver established in 1842 and changed to Coal Passer in 1893. This likely was the source of the terminology – **black gang**. The Cooper made wooden buckets, barrels and kegs but

were disestablished in 1884 as metal use became more common. An interesting anecdote regarding Coopers – they would take a wooden butt (a type of cask) and scuttle it by punching a hole to provide the crew with drinking water. The crew would swap gossip while gathered at the cask on breaks (just like modern water-cooler conversations) - which is why many old salts still refer to news and rumors as **scuttlebutt**.

Following the Civil War most ships were laid up in reserve. There were just 6,000 men in the Navy in 1878. They had begun building “modern” ships in the early 1880s and by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the US Navy grew from just 12<sup>th</sup> in fleet size in the world to the 5<sup>th</sup> largest fleet. The increase in fleet size, ship types and technological changes would bring about the need for even more different ratings, and with very different specialties.

*(To be continued.)*

## HISTORY OF THE HOSPITAL CORPS - UNITED STATES NAVY

### ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPS

Few military organizations can look upon their histories with the same degree of pride and awe as the Navy Hospital Corps. Since the establishment of the Navy medical department in Colonial times and the commissioning of the Hospital Corps a century ago, Hospital Corpsmen and their forerunners have proven themselves ready to support Marines and Sailors by giving them aid whenever and wherever necessary. This level of dedication has remained a strong current running through the Corps’ history, even as the tools and techniques used by its members have evolved.

### REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The first direction given to the organization of Navy medicine consisted of only one article in the Rules for the Regulation of the Navy of the United Colonies of North America of 1775. Article 16 stated:

*A convenient place shall be set apart for sick or hurt men, to be removed with their hammocks and bedding when the surgeon shall advise the same to be necessary: and some of the crew shall be appointed to attend to and serve them and to keep the place clean. The cooper shall make buckets with covers and cradles if necessary for their use.*

Interestingly, the cooper (or barrel-maker), whose skills could be used to make bedpans, had a more detailed job description than did any kind of trained medical assistant.

*(Continued on Page 5.)*



## Lost Boats - August

### ***USS Bullhead (SS-332)***

Lost on August 6, 1945 with the loss of 84 crew members in the Lombok Strait while on her 3rd war patrol when sunk by a depth charge dropped by a Japanese Army plane. ***Bullhead*** was the last submarine lost during WWII. [Editor's Note: For those of you that give tours or have looked at the photographs on the chart table in the Control Room of the ***Razorback***, the one shown at the right is from the ***Bullhead***. There is another black & white photograph on a table in the Crew's Mess showing men eating. I believe that is also from the ***Bullhead*** but cannot verify where I saw that.]



### ***USS Flier (SS-250)***

Lost on August 13, 1944, with the loss of 78 crew members while on her 2nd war patrol. ***Flier*** was transiting on the surface when she was rocked by a massive explosion (probably a mine) and sank within less than a minute. Thirteen survivors, some injured, made it into the water and swam to shore. Eight survived and 6 days later friendly natives guided them to a Coast Watcher and they were evacuated by the ***USS Redfin (SS-272)***. Picture at left is of five of the eight survivors of the sinking of the ***U.S.S. Flier*** gathered for the 50th anniversary in 1994. From the left are: Al Jacobson, Jim Liddell, John Crowley, Wesley Miller and Jim Russo. Arthur G. Howell, Earl Baumgart and Don Tremaine could not attend the event.



### ***USS S-39 (SS-144)***

Lost on August 13, 1942 after grounding on a reef south of Rossel Island while on her 3rd war patrol. The entire crew was able to get off and rescued by the ***HMAS Katoomba***, shown at right, one of sixty Australian minesweepers (commonly known as corvettes) built during World War II.



### ***USS Harder (SS-257)***

Lost on August 24, 1944 with the loss of 79 crew members from a depth charge attack by a minesweeper near Bataan while on her 6th war patrol. ***Harder*** had won a Presidential Unit Citation for her first 5 war patrols and CDR Dealey was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously. ***Harder*** is tied for 9th in the number of enemy ships sunk. ***Patrol Boat No. 102*** (shown to the right), sank the ***Harder (SS-257)***, according to combinedfleet.com. Adding grim irony to this Japanese triumph and American tragedy was the fact that ***Patrol Boat No. 102*** was none other than the ex-American destroyer ***Stewart (DD-224)*** Japan had captured.



### ***USS Cochino (SS-345)***

Lost on August 26, 1949 after being jolted by a violent polar gale off Norway caused an electrical fire and battery explosion that generated hydrogen and chlorine gasses. In extremely bad weather, men of ***Cochino*** and ***Tusk (SS-426)*** fought to save the submarine for 14 hours. After a 2nd battery explosion, abandon ship was ordered and ***Cochino*** sank. ***Tusk's*** crew rescued all of ***Cochino's*** men except for one civilian engineer. Six sailors from ***Tusk*** were lost during the rescue: **Robert Francis Brunner, Jr., John George Guttermuth, Melvin Buck Henneberger, Jr., James Robert Miller, Robert Lee Pinney and Wilson Manley Shafer, Jr.** Note that these men are not recognized in our Eternal Patrol ceremonies.



(Continued from Page 3.)

## HISTORY OF THE HOSPITAL CORPS, cont'd.

A typical medical section was usually limited to two, perhaps three men: the surgeon, the surgeon's mate, and possibly an enlisted man. The surgeon was a physician. The surgeon's mate, usually a doctor as well, held status like that of a modern warrant officer but signed on only for a particular cruise. Although surgeons' mates were historically viewed as part of the Medical Corps, their position and responsibilities appear to be more equivalent to those of today's senior Hospital Corpsmen.

Few things changed in medical techniques and organization between 1775 and 1814, the period covering America's first naval wars. Among the less dramatic responsibilities of caring for the noncombatant and injured were feeding and personal care of the sick. The simple daily ration of porridge, or "loblolly," was sure to be carried down to those in the medical space by untrained attendants.

### SURGEON'S MATES AND LOBLOLLY BOYS

Congress approved an act on March 2, 1799, which copied the words of the Continental Congress' medical department Article 16 of 1775 exactly. As a result, there was still no title or job description for enlisted medical personnel. The nickname "loblolly boy" was in common use for so many years that it became the official title in Navy Regulations of 1814. The loblollyboy's job, described in the Regulations of 1818, included the following:

*The surgeon shall be allowed a faithful attendant to issue, under his direction, all supplies and provisions and hospital stores, and to attend the preparation of nourishment for the sick. . . . The surgeon's mates shall be particularly careful in directing the loblollyboy to keep the cockpit clean, and every article therein belonging to the Medical Department. The surgeon shall prescribe for casual cases on the gun deck every morning at 9 o'clock, due notice having been previously given by his loblolly boy by ringing of a bell.*

### SURGEON'S STEWARDS AND LOBLOLLY BOYS

A new senior enlisted medical rate, Surgeon's Steward, was introduced in the ensuing decades. The term is first seen in 1841 in Navy pay charts, but it appears that the new billet was only allowed on larger ships. By April 1, 1843, the Navy Department issued an order allowing Surgeon's Stewards to be assigned to brigs and schooners. The relative importance of medical Sailors was hereby increased. Surgeon's Stewards ranked second in seniority among the ship's petty officers, next only after the Master-at-Arms.

### SURGEON'S STEWARDS AND NURSES

The year 1861 brought civil war to this country, and - due to the enormous expansion of the Navy because of the war—changes and developments in the medical department ensued. On June 19, 1861, a Navy Department circular order established a new name for the loblolly boy.

*In addition to a Surgeon's Steward, 1 nurse would be allowed for ships with a complement of less than 200; 2 nurses would be allowed for ships with a complement of more than 200; and sufficient nurses would be allowed on receiving ships in a number proportionate to the necessities of the vessel.*

While the shipboard medical department changed the titles of its personnel, new techniques in mass care of the sick and wounded were also developed. A captured sidewheel steamer was repaired and modified to care for patients. Refinements to the ship included bathrooms, kitchens, and laundries - even elevators and the facilities to carry 300 tons of ice. On December 26, 1862, the **USS Red Rover** became the first Navy vessel specifically commissioned as a hospital ship. The medical complement included 30 surgeons and male nurses, as well as four nuns.



(To be continued.)



## 49 Signs You're Getting Older (Large Print Edition)

1. Everything hurts and what doesn't hurt doesn't work.
2. The gleam in your eyes is from the sun hitting your bifocals.
3. You feel like the morning after and you haven't been anywhere.
4. Your little black book contains only-names that end in M.D.
5. Your children begin to look middle-aged.
6. You finally reach the top of the ladder and find it leaning against the wrong wall.
7. Your mind makes contracts your body can't meet.
8. You look forward to a dull evening.
9. Your favorite part of the newspaper is "20 Years Ago Today."
10. You turn out the lights for economic rather than romantic reasons.
11. You sit in a rocking chair and can't get it going.
12. Your knees buckle, and your belt won't.
13. You're 17 around the neck, 42 around the waist, and 95 around the golf course.
14. Your back goes out more than you do.
15. Your Pacemaker makes the garage doors go up when you see a pretty girl.
16. The little old gray-haired lady you helped across the street is your wife.
17. You sink your teeth into a steak, and they stay there.
18. You have too much room in the house and not enough in the medicine cabinet.
19. You get your exercise acting as a pallbearer for your friends who exercise.
20. You know all the answers, but nobody asks you the questions.
21. You're asleep, but others worry that you're dead.
22. You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room.
23. You buy a compass for the dash of your car.
24. You are proud of your lawn mower.
25. Your best friend is dating someone half his age.....and isn't breaking any laws.
26. You call Olan Mills before they call you.
27. Your arms are almost too short to read the, newspaper.
28. You sing along with the elevator music.
29. You would rather go to work than stay home.
30. You constantly talk about the price of gasoline.
31. You enjoy hearing about other people's operations.
32. You consider coffee one of the most important things in your life.
33. You make an appointment to see the dentist.
34. You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.
35. Neighbors borrow your tools.
36. People call at 9 p.m. and ask, "Did I wake you?"
37. You have a dream about prunes.
38. You answer a question with, "Because I said so."
39. You send money to PBS.
40. The end of your tie doesn't come anywhere near the top of your pants.
41. You take a metal detector to the beach.
42. You wear black socks with sandals.
43. You know what the word "equity" means.
44. You can't remember the last time you lay on the floor to watch TV.
45. Your ears are hairier than your head.
46. You get into a heated argument about pension plans.
47. You got cable for the weather channel (sometimes referred to as "Old Folks MTV").
48. You have a party and the neighbors don't even realize it.
49. When you bend over, you look for something else to do while you're down there.



August + Birthdays	
Edward D. Watts	2
Robert G. Medearis	3
Bonnie Zonner	3
John A. Albers	7
Billy Don Dempsey	7
Stanley A. Walker	9
Raymond Paul Wewers	11
William L. Nichols	12
John Przybys	18
Dennis D. Foster	19
James M. Barnum	23
Billy D. Hollaway	23
Nicholas Charles Proctor	25
James R. Stephens	25
Sandy Stephens	25
Juanez Stiltz	27
September	
Stephen M. Pittman	4
Leslie L. Nichols	5
Joseph R. Mathis	9
June R. Eubanks	10

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**Booster Club**

Avery (TX) Class of 1958 in Memory of Bob Stiltz, Jr. (6)  
Suzann & John Barr (0)  
Bruce Dart (6)  
Wesley Dodson, Jr. (2)  
James Flanders (6)  
George Fore (6)  
James & Susan Franks (5)  
Ron Hines (6)  
Terence & Kathleen Murphy (3)  
Ann & Tom Salisbury (11)  
Frank C. Tillery (4)  
Fred Weilminster (6)  
Barbara & Ray Wewers (3)  
George Wrightam (11)

TREASURER'S REPORT	JULY 2015
TOTAL BASE FUNDS BEGINNING BALANCE	\$ 15,667.54
General Fund Beginning Balance	\$ 5,960.06
<b>DEPOSITS</b>	
Schwerman RV site overpayment	\$ 3.00
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Schwerman RV site reimbursement	\$ 36.30
Newsletter Printing	\$ 250.00
General Fund Ending Balance	\$5,676.76
Designated Funds Beginning Balance	\$ 4,233.50
Maintenance Fund Balance	\$ 2,355.64
Charity Fund Beg. Balance	\$ 472.00
Out of the Woods Contribution	\$ 100.00
Charity Fund End Balance	\$ 372.00
Snook Memorial Fund Balance	\$ 1,405.86
Designated Funds Ending Balance	\$ 4,133.50
Checking Balance (General + Designated Funds)	\$ 9,810.26
<b>Other Funds</b>	
CD Beg. Balance	\$ 5,221.98
Interest	\$ 1.30
CD End Balance	\$ 5,223.28
Cash on Hand	\$ 252.00
<b>TOTAL BASE FUNDS ENDING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 15,285.54</b>
Respectfully submitted,	
Mark Taylor, Base Treasurer	

Funds from the *Booster Club* will be used for restoration of the *USS Razorback* and other special projects appropriate to the mission of *USSVI*. Your donation will be recognized for 12 issues of the newsletter. The number beside your name below is the number of times remaining to be listed. Send donations to Razorback Base – USSVI, 9 Broadview Dr., Little Rock, AR 72207-5113 (Memo – Booster Club).





## Base Activities and Notes

- August Base meeting—**CANCELLED**.
- September 7 - 12: USSVI national convention, Pittsburg, PA; the Westin Convention Center.
- September Base meeting on the 26th. Details TBD.
- October 10th - Navy Anniversary Dinner. At Mike's Place in Conway. Cash bar at 5:45 and dinner approximately 6:15. Contact Sheri Hollaway at cpasjh@earthlink.net or 501-758-3266 for reservations.
- November 28 - Base meeting. TBD.
- December - Christmas Party. TBD.

### Welcome to a New Shipmate - Harold E. (Gene) Horn

**Gene served in the US Navy from 1975 to 1984, and qualified on the USS Simon Bolivar, SSBN-641, in 1979. He was an ET1(SS). Gene lives in Russellville with his wife, Gloria.  
Hope to see you soon shipmate!**

### Order Your 2016 Calendars Now

**2016 calendars are available for order now. Please contact Billy Hollaway at 501-758-3266 or casper1@earthlink.net. All orders should be in well before the end of this year.**

### From the Desk (okay, PC) of Carl Schmidt

August 14, 2015 at 1300 at the State Capitol Rotunda there will be a closure of World War II and salute to WWII veterans. I hope to see many base members attending this activity at the state capital wearing their vests and caps to honor the WWII Veterans in attendance.

All annual members - USSVI dues increase to \$25.00 January 1, 2016. Paying your dues in advance for 3 years or 5 years will save you money. Paying 3 years in advance (\$55.00) will save you \$20.00. Paying you dues 5 years in advance (\$90.00) will save you \$35.00.

### Base Officers

Base Commander	Jim Gates	501-580-4680	gates.jim@sbcglobal.net
Base Vice Commander	Billy Hollaway	501-758-3266	retldousn@earthlink.com
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Membership	Greg Schwerman	501-804-0386	gschwerman@suddenlink.net
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National (USSVI) Archives Committee Chairman			
Past Base Commander	James W. Barnes	501-778-6583	jimandsue59@sbcglobal.net
Activities	Ray Wewers	479-967-5541	raywewers@gmail.com
Past Base Commander & USSVI Secretary			
Past Base Commander	Alan Malone	501-206-7248	o5retired@yahoo.com
Past Base Commander	Carl Schmidt	501-843-7855	bonnyclyde@classicnet.net
Base Web Master	Greg Zonner	501-307-5522	gzonner@aimm.museum
Past Base Commander			
Past Base Commander	Paul Honeck	501-319-5888	pneckerar@gmail.com