



UNITED STATES SUBMARINE VETERANS



“To Honor Those Who Serve, Past, Present & Future”

March 2023

Volume 24, Issue 03

**Lest We Forget —  
“The USSVI Submariner’s Creed”**

**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.**

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**News Brief**

1. **Next Meeting:** At 1100, third Saturday of each month at the Knollwood Sportsman’s Club. Mark your calendars for these upcoming dates:
  - a. **March 18**
  - b. **April 15**
  - c. **May 20**
2. **Duty Cook Roster:**
  - a. MARCH – BRET ZACHER AND CHRIS GAINES
  - b. APRIL – MAURICE YOUNG
  - c. MAY – MANNY GARMENDEZ AND TED ROTZOLL
3. **March Birthdays:** Chris Gaines 13<sup>th</sup>; John Lindstedt 17<sup>th</sup>; Richard Smiskol 26<sup>th</sup>. Happy Birthday, Shipmates.
4. **Recycle books:** [www.booksforsoldiers.com](http://www.booksforsoldiers.com) and Operation Paperback, [www.operationpaperback.org](http://www.operationpaperback.org), put reading material into the hands of our troops.

## Crash Dive Meeting Minutes February 18, 2023

- 1) Call to Order 1110
- 2) Attendance
  - a) Dave Cornell
  - b) Ted Rotzoll
  - c) Maurice Young
  - d) Chris Gaines
  - e) Scott Jaklin
  - f) Frank Walter, Jr.
  - g) Frank Voznak
  - h) Clayton Hill
  - i) Manny Garmendez
  - j) Bret Zacher
- 3) Reports:
  - a) Secretary's Report
    - i) Sent initial contact emails to National Museum of the American Sailor
  - b) Treasurer's Report: Total Assets \$14,192.19
    - i) Funds in GLCU: Checking \$947.89, Savings \$2,050.00 (\$1,060.00 for Cobia)
    - ii) Crash Dive Memorial: \$6,084.30; Cobia Drydock: \$5,010.00; Petty Cash: \$100
    - iii) Memorial Fund interest accrual this month; numbers updated above
    - iv) Relieved to be relieved as Charitable Fund Officer
  - c) Committee Reports
    - i) Newsletter – Chris Gaines
      - (1) Newsletters are completed and posted via website and emails
    - ii) Membership – Chris Gaines

- (1) All members are up to date on dues; 4 non-renewals.
  - (2) Martin Salvador made honorary life member of Crash Dive
  - iii) Community Outreach– Bret Zacher
  - iv) Hospitality – Bret Zacher
  - v) Webmaster – Frank Voznak
  - vi) Storekeeper – Herman Mueller [ABSENT]
    - (1) Bret says shirt/hat ordering in the coming week \$25 shirts & \$20 hats
  - vii) Eagle Scout – Ted Rotzoll
    - (1) Gave 5 certificates to Glenn
- 4) Old (Unfinished) Business
    - a) WWII Chicago Memorial: Paver Program
      - i) Publicity and order forms soon
        - (1) Flyer not published yet, due to pending approval for install dates in Nov.
        - (2) New city rep has replaced Michelle, but she's still at the same office.
        - (3) Rickover Academy honor guard request made; no boat tolling planned.
    - b) USSVI Web Database Updates
      - i) Blackbaud only for 2023 Tucson Convention
      - ii) Tim Carlisle, Chief Technology officer, injured at work; website delayed.
    - c) Operation Handshake: contact with GLNS

- i) Harry Alvey footlocker: location and condition?
  - (1) Clay contacted Leon Lemma, but did not follow up on transfer to Harry's daughter.
  - (2) Trunk found in barn in summer of 2022; Clay will follow up on location.
- 5) New Business
  - a) Staff note: USSVI Finance Board to be discussed at base staff meeting
- 6) Good of the Order
  - a) Duty Cook
    - i) March – Bret and Chris
    - ii) April – Maurice Young
    - iii) May – Manny Garmendez & Ted Rotzoll
  - b) 786 Club
    - i) March 1<sup>st</sup>: speaker Dep. Commander of StratCom at Union League Club
    - ii) Planning to visit Pearl Harbor in Jan 2024
  - c) 2023-2024 Submarine Veterans Scholarship: expanded to vocational training, trade schools and apprenticeships. Applications open until 15 May 2023.
  - d) USSVI National Convention in Tucson: 28 Aug to 03 Sep 2023
  - e) WW2 Lost Subs Found: USS Albacore and Grayback found off coast of Japan
  - f) Cobia Drydock Fundraising: Greg Miller reports raising \$5k; to be added to overall fund.

- g) David Cornell: Medals of America e-store and submarine poem.
- 7) SOUND Klaxon
  - a) Next Meeting is 18 March 2023
- 8) Adjourn [1252]

## Lost Boats

USS Perch	(SS 176)	3/3/42
USS Grampus	(SS 207)	3/5/43
USS H-1	(SS 28)	3/12/20
USS Triton	(SS 201)	3/15/43
USS Kete	(SS 369)	3/20/45
USS S-4	(SS 23)	3/25/15
USS Tullibee	(SS 284)	3/26/44
USS Trigger	(SS 237)	3/26/45

## Russia Loses World's Largest Nuclear Submarine

Story by Brendan Cole • Feb 6

The Russian Navy has confirmed it has decommissioned its nuclear-powered strategic submarine *Dmitry Donskoy*, which formed part of Moscow's formidable Cold War weapon system.



The Russian submarine Dmitry Donskoy in Saint Petersburg, on July 26, 2017. Russia's Navy has announced on February 6, 2023 that the Cold War era vessel had been decommissioned. © OLGA MALTSEVA/Getty Images

There had been speculation for months about the fate of the submarine, which had been launched in 1980 and whose [NATO](#) reporting name was Typhoon.

In 2021, Russia's state news agency Tass reported that the vessel would stay in service until 2026.

It was the first of six Akula-class Northern Fleet submarines [laid down at the Sevmash shipyard](#) in Severodvinsk on the White Sea which were commissioned in the 1980s.

At 574 feet long, *Dmitry Donskoy's* status as the world's [largest submarine](#) was overtaken by the 608-foot-long *Belgorod* nuclear submarine, which was [commissioned](#) in July 2022. *Dmitry Donskoy* had a displacement of around 53,000 tons and was modernized and re-equipped in 2002 with the "Bulava" missile.

While it was reported in July 2022 that the vessel had been terminated, no official confirmation was expected until the end of the year. The vessel's last reported activity was in the sea trials of *SSN Krasnoyarsk* in September 2022.

On Monday, Vladimir Maltsev, head of the Russian Movement for Navy Support, told TASS that the vessel had been "decommissioned" and would "await utilization at a naval base in Severodvinsk together with two other units of this project."

The class was the backbone of the Soviet Union's second-strike nuclear deterrent, with 20 massive R-39 "Rif" SLBMs (submarine-launched ballistic missile) having up to 200 warheads in total. The Drive described it as the "most deadly

single weapon system" Russia had designed in the Cold War. *Newsweek* has contacted the Russian defense ministry for comment.

Russia suffered problems with another of its vessels recently, the 1000-foot flagship [Admiral Kuznetsov, which is reportedly unable](#) to move under its own power. Russia's only aircraft carrier has been out of service and in dry dock for repairs for more than five years and has been beset by technical setbacks.

However, the Russian Navy has been boosted by [the Belgorod](#) submarine, which is 39 feet longer than the U.S. Navy's Ohio-class submarines. [Poseidon torpedoes](#) are due to be delivered to the special-purpose nuclear-powered submarine, according to [TASS](#).

The Belgorod could carry up to eight Poseidons, according to a U.S. Congressional Research Service report. Poseidon was first announced by [Vladimir Putin](#) in 2018 as a new type of strategic nuclear weapon with its own power source.

*Update 02/06/23, 1 p.m. ET: This article has been updated to clarify details about the size of the Dmitry Donskoy.*

## **Wreckage of long-lost US submarine from World War II found off Japanese coast**

By Corey Dickstein  
Stars and Stripes • February 16, 2023

The long-lost wreckage of a U.S. Navy submarine credited with sinking nearly a dozen enemy ships during World War II before vanishing in late 1944 has been

found off the coast of northern Japan, Navy officials announced Thursday.



The USS Albacore off Groton, Conn., in May 1942. Note the large conning tower and periscope sheers. (U.S. Navy History and Heritage Command)

The USS Albacore's wreckage was confirmed by the Naval History and Heritage Command's Underwater Archaeology Branch after it was located recently off the coast of Hokkaido, the northernmost of Japan's main islands, the Navy said in a news release. The NHHC used information and imagery provided by Tamaki Ura, a University of Tokyo professor who has specialized in developing autonomous underwater vehicles to confirm the identity of the submarine. The Albacore disappeared while patrolling in the Pacific Ocean and had at least 85 sailors aboard.

"As the final resting place for [U.S.] sailors who gave their life in defense of our nation, we sincerely thank and congratulate Dr. Ura and his team for their efforts in locating the wreck of Albacore," Samuel Cox, the director of the NHHC, said in a statement. "It is through their hard work and continued collaboration that we could confirm Albacore's identity after being lost at sea for over 70 years."

The Albacore was last heard from by the U.S. military on Oct. 28, 1944, when it stopped at Midway for fuel en route for its 11th combat patrol in the waters off northern Japan, according to Naval records. The Gato-class submarine was believed sunk in a Nov. 7, 1944, underwater explosion reported in Japanese military records, likely the result of hitting an underwater mine. The location of the ship's wreckage appeared to confirm those details, according to the Navy.



A screenshot of the wreck site of the USS Albacore, which was lost at sea Nov. 7, 1944. Indications of documented modifications made to Albacore prior to her final patrol such as the presence of an SJ Radar dish and mast, a row of vent holes along the top of the superstructure, and the absence of steel plates along the upper edge of the fairwater allowed Naval History and Heritage Command to confirm the wreck site finding as the Albacore. The screenshot was captured from video courtesy of Tamaki Ura from the University of Tokyo. (Abigail Lutz/Naval History and Heritage Command)

Before the sub's sinking, the Albacore had proved a capable warship. The vessel was built by the Electric Boat Company and commissioned into the Navy on June 1, 1942. The Navy credited the submarine with sinking at least 10 enemy ships during its brief tenure — earning the Albacore nine battle stars



for meritorious participation in battle and four Presidential Unit Citations for extraordinary heroism in combat. The Navy said the Albacore might have been responsible for sinking three additional ships during the war, but those have not been confirmed.

Among the sub's known sinkings were Japanese destroyers, freighters and the 31,000-ton Japanese aircraft carrier Taiho, then the newest and largest carrier in the Japanese fleet. Taiho sunk hours after being struck by a torpedo fired by the Albacore during the Battle of the Philippine Sea, according to the Navy. The Albacore's crew did not know at the time that they had sunk the flagship after diving deep to escape incoming aerial attacks. Months later, the Albacore's top officer at that time, Lt. Cmdr. James Blanchard, was awarded the Navy Cross, the service's second-highest honor for combat heroics, for his role in sinking the Taiho.

The Navy said Ura used unmanned underwater craft to locate the Albacore based on Japanese records documenting the Nov. 7, 1944, explosion off Hokkaido.

"Strong currents, marine growth and poor visibility on site made it challenging to fully document the wreck or obtain comprehensive images," the Navy statement said. "However, several key features of a late 1944 Gato-class submarine were identified in the video."

Those features included the presence of a SJ Radar dish and mast, a row of vent holes along the top of the superstructure and the absence of steel plates along the ship's upper edge consistent with the Albacore's construction at the time that the submarine was last seen, according to the Navy.

The Albacore's wreckage now falls under the NHHC's jurisdiction and is protected from intrusion by U.S. law, the Navy said.

"The wreck represents the final resting place of sailors that gave their life in defense of the nation and should be respected by all parties as a war grave," the Navy statement reads.

## **Australia's First Nuclear Submarine Could Be a Reality in Less Than 30 Years, Former PACOM Commander Testifies**

By: [John Grady](#)

Updated: February 7, 2023 10:30 PM



Able Seaman Combat Systems Operator Benjamin Stewart participates in an Anti-Submarine Warfare exercise with a Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force submarine during Exercise ARC21 in 2021. Royal Australian Navy Photo

Developing a nuclear-powered submarine with Australia could happen in less than 30 years if “we put our shoulders to the task” and commit to a tight timetable, retired Adm. Harry Harris told lawmakers Tuesday.

Harris, a former commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, called Australia the United States’ key ally in the Indo-Pacific, citing the so-called AUKUS agreement. Washington’s and London’s willingness to share the “crown jewel” of nuclear propulsion and other high-technology advances with Canberra demonstrate a determination to counter Chinese ambitions, Harris said during a House Armed Services Committee hearing on China.

Harris’ timeline matches up with recent comments by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday, who told a Korean-American security group recently that he didn’t expect to see the first Australian-built nuclear submarine until sometime “well into the 2040s.”

Canberra is expected to make an announcement in the coming weeks over which design it will choose to follow in developing, building and fielding the submarine as part of the agreement between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, known as AUKUS, signed in September 2021.

Harris said AUKUS would “only be significant if we follow through” over

whatever time it takes to field the submarine.

The former PACOM chief told lawmakers that he would characterize today’s China as an “adversary” rather than as a “competitor.” The reasons, he added, were its “coordinated, methodical” moves, from threatening Taiwan with invasion, to bullying the Philippines and sending a surveillance balloon over the United States.

China’s policies and goals regionally and globally are worrisome, Harris said.

Zeroing in on the defense of Taiwan, Melanie Sisson, a fellow at the Brookings Institution, said U.S. steps to disperse troops, giving its forces in the Indo-Pacific greater mobility and moving decision-making down to local levels, adds to the island’s defenses.

She added that these changes show that Beijing expects greater battle damage in an invasion of Taiwan, since scattered forces could counterattack. They also put severe stress on the Chinese economy by shutting down shipping lanes for needed imports of food and energy.

Both Sisson and Harris agreed that strong alliances the U.S. has with Japan, South Korea and Australia and a new basing agreement with the Philippines signal to China the consequences of aggression.

Australia recognizes the “precarious position” the country is in when it comes to “China’s tone-deaf behavior,” Harris said, referring to all American allies in the Indo-Pacific.

Harris added the Pacific Defense Initiative has been a great help to allies in improving their capabilities and is playing a key role in bolstering missile defenses on Guam, the American territory that has a major air base and naval support facilities. Both Harris and Sisson noted that Marine Corps Commandant David Berger’s vision for dispersing forces with increased lethality is a move in the right direction of further complicating China’s military planning.

To help the Taiwanese defend the island, Harris recommended a strong American commitment to train its reserve forces. Taiwan has mandated all men serve for a year as part a change to its mandatory conscription terms. Both recommended anti-air and anti-ship missiles and mines.



Taiwanese Marines on Jan. 11, 2023. Taiwan Ministry of National Defense Photo

Sisson said the weapons “need to be relevant” to the pressures of a blockade and to build up resilience and resistance if invaded.

Harris added that on the economic side, the U.S. should sign a free trade pact with Taiwan that would open up its economy to greater expansion. A side benefit of that would be the encouragement it gives to other nations to trade with the democratic, self-governing island.

Washington’s “strategic ambiguity” policy has maintained peace between Beijing and Taipei for 40 years, Sisson said. Harris called for clarity in the relationship so there would be no misunderstanding that the United States would defend Taiwan if it were attacked.

As for where the United States should be investing more militarily, Harris said, “the first we have to get right is nuclear capability” and modernization. “We have the military we have” now in terms of armor, aircraft and ships; and it takes up to 30 years to build new weapons platforms. The existing arsenal “must be ready to fight tonight.”

Sisson wanted to see greater resources put into artificial intelligence to aid mobility and lethality, rather than in new platforms.

Both lamented the cancellation of Secretary of State Antony Blinken’s trip to Beijing after a Chinese



surveillance balloon entered U.S. airspace. Having high-level contacts help avoid miscalculation on either side in situations like that, Sisson said.

## The Missing U.S. Submarines for Australia

The defense deal is great, but the boats won't arrive for years.

By [The Editorial Board](#)  
(<https://www.wsj.com/news/author/editorial-board>)  
March 14, 2023 5:56 pm ET



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, President Joe Biden, and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at Point Loma naval base in San Diego, March 13. Photo: Stefan Rousseau/Associated Press

President Biden in San Diego on Monday announced a deal to help Australia acquire U.S. nuclear-powered submarines, a step forward by a stalwart ally to check Beijing. But Mr. Biden isn't highlighting the dysfunctions in American submarine production, nor the urgent need for a generational effort to expand the U.S. Navy's undersea fleet.

The threats to global stability and the US homeland are growing. How will the war in Ukraine end? Can China and the US develop a less combative relationship? Join historian and Journal columnist Walter Russell Mead

and editorial page editor Paul Gigot for an interactive conversation on the threats to US security.

The Pacific and the world are at “an inflection point,” that will “affect the prospect of peace for decades to come,” as Mr. Biden said on Monday, and the submarine deal is an expansion of Aukus, the 2021 defense pact among the U.S., U.K. and Australia. The agreement has three planks: Putting submarines on station Down Under; offering the Aussies at least three U.S. Virginia-class attack submarines in the early 2030s; and a new, late 2030s submarine that blends British design and U.S. technology.

U.S. submarines are making more stops in Australian ports, and Aussie sailors will attend U.S. nuclear-power school as they learn to operate some of the most sophisticated military assets in the world. Submarines from the U.S. and U.K. will rotate through an Australian naval base, slated to begin in 2027. These are excellent incremental steps to work with friends to put more hard power in the Pacific.

The U.S. will later sell Australia up to five Virginia-class submarines to replace the country's six aging conventionally powered boats. Virginia-class subs can travel vast distances without surfacing, and U.S. undersea ability is “maybe the only true asymmetric advantage we still have against our opponents,” as a four-star admiral [put it last year](#).

Take a potential Chinese assault on Taiwan. [In this year's war game](#) by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, U.S. submarines pummeled the Chinese naval fleet in the Taiwan Strait. But as CSIS notes with understatement, “numbers were inadequate,” especially with a 20% attrition

rate per 3.5 days that increased as the war continued.

The U.S. Navy's official goal is 66 boats, and other analyses suggest the more comfortable number is 70 or even 78. But the sea service now has only 50 and that number may dip as older classes age. The Navy's latest 30-year shipbuilding plan doesn't reach 66 boats until the late 2040s at the earliest.

Congress is buying two Virginia-class boats a year and wants three. But the industrial base has churned out only about 1.2 a year over the past five years. Defense contractors are swamped trying to build two fast attack boats while also producing ballistic missile subs, in the first overhaul of the nuclear deterrent in decades.

The U.S. Navy maintenance backlog is such that [in fiscal 2021 the fleet lost 1,500 days waiting for repair](#). That's the equivalent of having four fewer submarines, the Navy's brass has said. About 3.5 more were out of commission because repairs took longer than planned.

Having Australia contribute to costs and operating these submarines could be a "rising tide that lifts all boats," as House lawmakers said in a letter in January. But the Aussies will have to follow through with billions of dollars, no easy feat in a country with a defense budget of some \$30 billion, about 2.1% of GDP.

Mr. Biden says he'll pour \$4.6 billion into U.S. submarine development, though that alone can't compensate for decades of under investment, a dearth of skilled labor, supply-chain disruption and a shortage of dry docks. Fixing U.S. submarine disrepair would require sustained focus and presidential leadership, so far not in evidence. Mr. Biden's budget this week again cuts the Pentagon after inflation and shrinks the Navy to 291 ships in 2028.

The Aukus deal is a reminder that the U.S. remains the friend of choice around the world, and it's an opening to launch a national effort to build three attack subs a year. But meeting the defense needs of allies and America will take more than parchment promises.

*Appeared in the March 15, 2023, print edition as 'The Missing U.S. Subs for Australia'*

### Crash Dive Base Contact Information

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