

USS ALBACORE (AGSS-569)

NEWSLETTER # 10

August 2007

Dear Shipmate,

At the June meeting of the Friends of Albacore Committee, the group voted to commission two new items to be added to the Park grounds. The first is a memorial to the first submarine Albacore (SS 218) lost during World War II. This memorial will be placed in the Memorial Garden. The second item is a granite bench dedicated to Joe Sawtelle, one of the prime movers in getting our Albacore out of the Reserve Fleet in Philadelphia and back to Portsmouth. This bench will be located on the west side of the boat under some shade trees across from the sail.

During the August Friends meeting, we met with a representative of the Perry Monument Company to determine a delivery date and to firm up the exact locations for the two Park additions. We also discussed relocating one monument which currently resides inside the fence that surrounds Albacore. The side of the pit in which Albacore rests are eroding and the monument is in danger of falling to the bottom. This monument and the new Sawtelle bench will be located near an existing shipyard donated bench.

Three shipmates have stepped forward and volunteered to take on the planning effort for the next reunion, tentatively set for sometime in 2010. Frank Lyons ('67-'69) from Wayne, NJ, Jerry Sliss ('67-'69) from Poughkeepsie, NY and Jack Snodgrass ('67-'69) from Apex, NC will be pulling things together. Yes, it is a ways off, but it sounds like they are adhering to the seven P's: "Proper Prior Planning Prevents Piss Poor Performance". With two plus years to get things organized, we can expect a fine performance. They are working on a reunion survey to be sent out to all hands sometime after Labor Day. Stay tuned.

Admiral Ross Williams pointed out that Lt. Robert Krag, listed as being on Final Patrol on our website, was lost when the Thresher went down in 1963. Bob is the third former Albacore shipmate, along with John Garner and Wayne Lavoie, lost on Thresher. At the time, Bob was the SubLant representative on Thresher's sea trial.

We have lost contact with Danny Hixson. His snail mail copy of the last newsletter has been returned as undeliverable. But Dan Leefson has surfaced and is living at 38 Langston Lane, Media, PA 19063, (610) 353-4093, danleefson@aol.com. Dan and wife Barbara stopped by the boat during our August Friends meeting, And sad to report the

passing of Layton (Rich) Lewis in March of this year. (His sister Leah may be contacted at leahbutters@hotmail.com.)

A group of “boot” chief petty officers from the boats in overhaul at the shipyard will be spending a day at the Park working through a list of “To Do” items (the Park’s equivalent of our wife’s “Honey Do” list) as part of their service leading up to initiation. We welcome them and extend our thanks for their time and effort on Albacore’s behalf.

Along the same line, a group from the Heinemann Publishing Company, located in Portsmouth, will be coming aboard on 12 September to hold a field day on Albacore as part of the United Way of Greater Portsmouth’s Fall Day of Caring. If anyone can join us for the day, we will be starting at 0900. Lunch will be provided.

Captain Jim Ferrero’s article “Early Life of USS Albacore” was published in the Naval Submarine League’s July issue of “The Submarine Review” and is available on our website. Congratulations, Jim. Also on the website are two new items on the Flotsam & Jetsam page and some remembrances of the Early Days provided by Don Gasmire. If you have access to a computer, you can read all of this on our website www.ussalbacore.org.

If you are receiving this newsletter via Uncle Sam’s postal service, it is because we do not have an e-mail address for you. We would prefer to deliver the newsletters electronically to save on paper and stamps. So, if you have recently gotten on-line, had any changes of address, telephone numbers, e-mail providers or if you have items you would like posted on the website, please pass that information along to Jack Hunter at one of the below addresses.

And finally, a “Heads Up”. We are working on putting together another fund raising drive. Our exact target amount and what the money will go toward will be the subject of separate correspondence. We hope that you will be as supportive of this effort as you were of the first one three years ago when we raised over \$53K to benefit the Albacore.

That’s all for now.

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