

USS ALBACORE (AGSS 569)
NEWSLETTER # 45
March 2013

Dear Shipmate,

On January 24th, PPMMA held its annual meeting at the Discover Portsmouth Center on Middle Street in Portsmouth. Among the items discussed were the following:

The Treasurer indicated an income of \$200K primarily from admissions and museum sales, expenses of \$135K (of which payroll is the largest item) and a surplus of \$65K.

Executive Director John Maier reported that 33,000 people visited the museum during the year of which 8,000 were children. John highlighted many of the accomplishments and memorable occasions of the past year empathizing the many instances of volunteerism that was so important to the Park in holding down expenses. John is planning ahead for the 50th observance of the loss of the Thresher this coming April.

A moment of silence was observed in recognition of people closely connected with PPMMA who passed away: Jean Sawtelle, Patricia Graves, John McCarthy and Jeanine Milliken.

Current board members offered their observations on achievements of the last year. Paul McEchern recognized that board members had been more active in Park affairs. Russ Van Billiard stated that the Park was in far better shape. Norm Bower provided comments relative to FOA's participation during the past year. Bob Hassold was complemented for his participation in revitalizing spaces within the museum building. Gerry Sedor was cited for being one of the "doers" on the board. Ken Herrick was recognized for his ongoing involvement with the NH and ME DOTs with regard to the replacement Sarah Mildred Long (middle) Bridge. Dick Wilder's prowess in capturing a family of muskrats living in the basin and Jim Wakefield's relocation of the muskrats was also acknowledged.

FOA representative Butch Jordan thanked the Board for their efforts during the past year. He specifically acknowledged the role John Maier has played in expanding the museum sales and cited John's hiring as one of the best decision made by the Board.

There followed the presentation of a proposed slate of officers and Directors. Officers nominated were: President - Phil Munck, Vice-President - Gerry Sedor, Treasurer - Dick Wilder, Secretary - Ken Herrick. Nominees for the position of Director were: Paul McEchern, Norm Bower, Jim Wakefield, Bob Hassold and Caryl Sawtelle. There were no nominations from the floor and by voice vote the slate was elected. Following the close of the meeting, some light refreshments were served.

If you have visited the museum, you may recall seeing a clear plastic box on the counter in the sales area. FOA placed that box there in the hopes that visitors, having enjoyed their tour of the boat, might feel inclined to drop a donation into the box to lend support to FOA's programs. Little did we expect "THE BOX" to be as successful as it has. Since the "THE BOX" has been in place, we have seen donations averaging \$120/month and, for 2012, over \$1800 was contributed.

The winter shutdown period of the Park has ended. The Park staff completely repainted the museum space behind the sales area. Display cabinets were rearranged and a larger screen TV was installed. This exhibit area is still a work in progress as the Staff and Board members move toward a new display philosophy. One thought is of relocating Albacore and submarine related items, formerly on display in the museum, into the boat by converting some unused/empty lockers into mini-display cases.

The National Park Service has become involved in the Albacore Connector Road and Sarah Mildred Long (SML) Bridge replacement projects. They advised NH DOT that both projects have the *potential* for having an adverse effect on Albacore as a National Historic Landmark and thus they (NPS) wish to become consultants, as is FOA. And the beat goes on.

Two proposed concepts for the new SML Bridge were viewed. One has the replacement bridge located parallel and just to the west of the current bridge that is at an angle with the channel. The second concept has the bridge to the west of the existing one but perpendicular to the channel. The second concept has the approach to the bridge from the NH side take a sweeping loop to the west from the foot of the existing bridge and then turn north-east to join the new bridge and then curving over to the ME side. Again, these are concepts and nothing as yet is set in stone.

John Maier (and FOA) are procuring two banners recognizing the anniversary of the loss of Thresher. These banners will be displayed on the lifelines either side of Albacore's sail. In addition, the Park will display Thresher memorabilia in the museum building during the weekend of 5-7 April.

The annual visit by Berwick Academy students for their Day of Service is slated for Friday, 12 April. There are usually a dozen students, accompanied by a faculty member, who arrive at the park around 0900. They are given a tour of the boat and then they turn two and tackle the list of work items John Maier and Norm Bower have generated. After a lunch break, they are back at it until they leave around 1330. The cost to the Park? Bottles of spring water. The students get a day away from academics, loosen up some muscles, sweat a little and have some fun. The Park gets a good cleanup. If you are in the area, stop by and join us.

We received word that there is a survivor from the first submarine Albacore living in Ohio. Clem O'Brien was a graduate of Annapolis who was sent to Albacore while waiting to enter flight training. Clem was the Plotting Officer when Albacore attacked and put one torpedo into IJN TIAHO, an aircraft carrier that hours later exploded and sank. Clem was detached just before Albacore sailed on her final fateful patrol. He went on to have a successful career in aviation. John and Norm put together and sent Clem a package of material on BOTH Albacores.

Shipmate George Fiegehen has an email address of "gfiegehen@wowway.com".

I regret to report that shipmate Cecil L. Schwenkner departed on Eternal Patrol on 11 January. An Albacore condolence card was sent to the family.

Our next Friends meeting is scheduled for Saturday, 13 April at 1100 at the museum. Again, if you are in the area, please stop in and join us.

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. In addition to the 195 copies sent out electronically, there are 62 more that go out as a hard copy. We would prefer to be totally GREEN and deliver the newsletters electronically to save on paper and stamps. So, if you have recently gotten on-line, or had a change of address, telephone number, e-mail provider or if you just have something you would like to submit for posting on the website, please pass that information along to Jack Hunter at one of the below addresses.

Until next time, shipmate.

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