

Have you visited... OUR NEW ONLINE STORE?

The new store offers us new opportunities to keep you informed on new product, current stock status, as well as feature special items on occasion. We are always adding new items to our current offerings – so please remember to check back for new items.

Browse...the store and see what we have to offer.

Suggestions...feel free to make suggestions to let us know what you'd like to see!
store.submarinemuseum.com



Reunions

USS Sunfish SSN649 and SS281

June 27 - July 1, 2012
New London Plaza Hotel
35 Governor Winthrop Boulevard
New London, CT 06320
Phone: (860) 443-7000
Contact: Joe Martin
828-284-0057
828-284-4262
josephmartin649@gmail.com
sunfish649@gmail.com

USS Casimir Pulaski (SSBN-633)

July 26-28, 2012
Location: Eugene, Oregon
Contact: Don Murphy
Web:
www.usscasimirpulaski.com
Phone: (321) 727-7981
Email: jdm4791@juno.com



1 President's Message

2-3 Black History Month

4 On OnLine Shop

From the Desk of the President

The Submarine Force Library & Museum Association was incorporated 10 November 1972, so **2012 is our 40th year** and we will be celebrating our 40th anniversary at our annual meeting this coming May. We sincerely hope that many of our members will be able to join us for this happy occasion.

February is Black History Month and we are celebrating the contribution of our black submariners at the museum. Each day during the month, the museum staff has been including an article honoring a black submariner pioneer in its Tidbits of Submarine History posting on Facebook. Most of the material for those postings comes from a book *Black Submariners in the United States Navy, 1940-1975* by Mr. Glenn Knoblock. A review of that book was published in the Fall 2006 issue of *The Klaxon* and is re-printed in this issue.

Each year the Submarine Force Library & Museum Association publishes an **Annual Donor Registry** listing donors who have contributed to the museum in the previous year and also recognizing donors who have achieved certain lifetime donor levels. Normally the donor registry is mailed out as a separate piece. This year for the first time we are including the donor registry as an insert in *The Klaxon*. As always we make every effort to make sure we include all

our donors at the appropriate level of recognition. However, mistakes are always possible; please bring any errors to our attention and we will correct them.

As we mentioned in the last *Klaxon*, the **new museum online store** is now up and operating. Please visit the store at www.ussnautilus.org and tell us what you think. Your feedback is important in helping us make the store the best it can be. While you are there go ahead and make a few purchases; remember all store profits go to help support the museum.

We are still **looking for email addresses** so we can send our electronic newsletter PING to all our members. To date, we have email addresses for less than half our members so we're asking for your help in this area; if you would like to receive PING please make sure we have an accurate, up to date email address. Send your email address to director@submarinemuseum.org and say you would like to be placed on the PING mailing list. We do not share our email listings with any other organization.

Please stop by and visit your museum whenever you are in the area and bring your friends. There is always something new to see.

David M. Goebel, RADM USN (Ret)



THE 39TH ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE SUBMARINE FORCE LIBRARY AND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

will take place on **Friday, May 18, 2012** at the Museum.

The museum doors will open at **5:00 p.m.** and the meeting will commence at **5:45 p.m.** Nautilus will be open for tours until **7:00 p.m.** A reception will follow the short business meeting from **6:30 to 8:00 p.m.**

All members in good standing are invited to attend and to bring a spouse or one guest.

Election of Association Officers for 2012 will be held during the short business meeting. Any member in good standing may submit nominations for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Each nomination must identify the office for which the individual is being nominated and must include a written statement from the nominee indicating that he/she consents and will accept the nomination and serve if elected. Nominations will close 72 hours prior to the commencement of the Annual Meeting. Submit nominations to
CAPT Arne C. Johnson USN (Ret),
186 Jerry Browne Rd, #1043, Mystic, CT 06355-3052.

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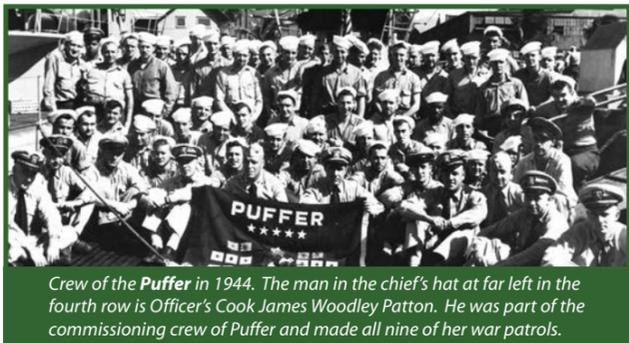


February is Black History Month

This article first appeared in the Fall 2006 issue of The Klaxon. It is a review of book written by Mr. Glenn Knoblock that chronicles the history of African Americans in the U.S. Submarine service. Throughout February, Black History Month, the museum has been making daily postings honoring black submariners on Facebook using material from Mr. Knoblock's book.

This work documents the service of Black submariners from World War II through the Cold War, but importantly begins with a brief treatise on Black sailors' service prior to World War II.

Black sailors have proudly and bravely served American Naval forces for as long as those forces have existed. Black sailors manned merchant vessels during the colonial period. A large number of Black sailors, both free and slave, helped to man ships of the Continental Navy during the American War for Independence. Also, in the War of 1812, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry had Black sailors in his crews. Nearly 30,000 Blacks served in the Union Navy during the Civil War, with four being awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. 2000 Black sailors served in the Spanish-American War with at least one receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor. Following the Spanish-American War efforts were made to phase out Black sailors from all ratings except for the messman's branch. Race relations in the Navy reflected those on land and restrictions on Black sailors tightened their service being essentially limited to menial functions. In 1919 Black enlistment in the Navy was stopped completely. This policy remained in effect until 1932 when Black enlistment was once again authorized but only as mess attendants. In June 1939 the Navy had 2807 Black men on active duty.



Crew of the *Puffer* in 1944. The man in the chief's hat at far left in the fourth row is Officer's Cook James Woodley Patton. He was part of the commissioning crew of *Puffer* and made all nine of her war patrols.

The bulk of the work is an exploration of the service of Black submariners from World War II through the Cold War era. Throughout, the author makes extensive use of personal accounts and histories to paint a complete picture of Black sailors experience in the Navy. Beginning with an overview of the Steward's Branch of the United States Navy during World War II; the book describes the experience of becoming a Steward including how Blacks joined the Navy either by voluntary enlistment or via the draft. It describes the Navy Book Camp experience including detailing the segregation experienced both as a result of official Navy policy and exposure to civilian communities surrounding the training centers. A discussion of the rating system, as it applied to Black sailors is also provided as a further example of the discrimination they experienced, discrimination that extended even to the wearing of different types of uniforms.

Next is an account of Becoming a Submariner, either directly from Boot Camp, transfer from the Surface Navy or from a Tender, Relief

Crew or Shore Duty. Some were sent to Submarine School, but most were not. The training they received was starkly different from that received by Whites and perhaps reflective of the Steward's Branch being at the bottom of the hierarchy. Following is a lengthy account of life as a wartime submariner, covering all aspects including the daily routine for Stewards, Submarine qualification, battle stations action, other shipboard activities, crew relations aboard the boats, R&R ashore, leaving the boat and War's end. Strong bonds were frequently formed by the stewards, particularly if they were both Black and the only Black sailors serving on the submarine. Their qualification was frequently limited to the forward torpedo room, forward battery, and the galley and sometimes control room, spaces where they performed the bulk of duties. But many enthusiastic stewards qualified throughout the

Black sailors have proudly and bravely served American Naval forces for as long as those forces have existed.

boat although few were encouraged to do so. Most who did qualify throughout the boat recounted encouraging experiences. Black stewards acquitted themselves well at battle stations as described in the next section which includes many first hand accounts of action including several experiences of being depth charged. Battle stations surface action is also described.

The author also includes sections on crew relations aboard the boat and R&R ashore. For the most part, as one might expect, there was little overt discrimination onboard the boats amongst the crews. Most Black submariners described how the crews treated them onboard ship as submarine sailors first without regard for their color. For R&R ashore, experiences largely depended upon where they were geographically located. In the States, particularly south of the Mason-Dixon Line, treatment of Black submariners ashore was the same as their civilian counterparts with strong regional prejudice being the norm. With exception of Hawaii, experiences at advance sites tended to be better; Australia was about as good as it could get. However, Hawaii was definitely not a paradise for Black submariners.

In his treatment of the postwar years, the author touches upon many landmark issues; the end of the 1940s and President Harry Truman's Executive Order ending segregation in the military, the 1950s and the dawn of the Nuclear Age, the 1960s with boomers and fast attacks and 1970 to 1975 an end and a beginning. In every decade, changes occurred that had an effect on all submariners. This section of the book is an informal history told by the men who were in the service during those times. One of the important differences; Black submariners would now serve in a variety of ratings and would no longer be restricted to the steward's branch of the Navy. Several experiences are recounted of Black submariners who were able to change rate from steward to other ratings and of men who were able to go into other ratings directly from enlistment.

Black submariners participated in and witnessed the birth of the nuclear navy, the evolution of the nuclear submarine and some of the extreme tensions of the cold war. They paved the way for those that followed, experienced desegregation in the Navy as it happened in the rest of the country, finally ending in the Navy with the conversion of the steward's branch along with the commissary man rating to the Mess Management Specialist rating and finally equal opportunity for all Blacks in the Navy.



Crew of the *Seahorse* stateside in late 1944. Steward's Mate 1st Class Samuel Sharp is in the second row (center), and Officers Cook 3rd Class Culasket Adams, Jr. is in the row behind him to the right.

Photographs are included throughout, many taken during WWII, of the many men whose histories are chronicled in the book. The final chapter contains histories of 81 Black submariners who served in World War II. There are 37 firsthand accounts of living Black submariners and 44 biographies of men who served in World War II but are either deceased, too ill to give their story or could not be located.

The author includes five appendices which provide (a) The Steward Rating System from 1939 to 1974, (b) the 74 Black stewards lost or killed during WWII, (c) a list of the 127 Black submariners who made 6 or more war patrols and (d) a boat by boat listing of most of the Black submariners that served during the war from 1941 to 1945.

This book is recommended for any student of submarine history interested in rounding out their knowledge of the silent service and in particular learning more about the brave service of African American sailors in defense of the United States of America.

By way of example, one of the histories in the final chapter of the book is included in its entirety, with permission of the author.

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George Washington Lytle

While little is known about big George Lytle, he has an impressive war record. When he joined the navy is uncertain, but it was probably sometime between 1938 and 1939. He joined the commissioning crew of *Drum* in November 1941 as a mess attendant 1st class and made her first ten war patrols. The first three patrols were conducted by Captain Robert Rice, from April to October 1942, and the next four were under Captain Bernard McMahan from November 1942 to September 1943. Lytle was virtually one and the same with *Drum*, for he would continue on with her, making two more runs under Captain Delbert Williamson, from November 1943 to May 1944 and a final run under Captain Maurice Rindskopf in June to July 1944. Only Rindskopf, who had served as executive officer on the boat, made more patrols on the boat than Lytle. During Lytle's time on *Drum*, she sank twelve ships worth over 60,000 tons, including a large seaplane tender on their first patrol. Lytle was one of the few stewards during the war to win a Bronze Star. Rindskopf believes this was not only for his overall service on the boat but may also have been related to his final patrol on *Drum* when Lytle and the deck gun crew saw action in sinking a sampan and taking several prisoners, and later when they shot up an island-based radio station. By the time George Lytle left *Drum*, he was an officer's cook 1st class.



After the war, George Lytle stayed in the navy and worked out of New London. The boats he served on are unknown. Upon retiring from the navy, Lytle was active in veteran's organizations and attended reunions with his old crew from *Drum*. Even in his old age, he was a giant of a man and cut an impressive figure. When he became ill in 1986, Captain B. Adams, a former ensign on *Drum* during the war, wrote to his old shipmate these encouraging words:

You were such a robust and vital person that it is difficult for me to believe that illness could ever strike at you. You were the number-one morale booster in the boat, handling those shells as number-one loader of the deck gun and stomping up and down the passageway in your depth-charge shoes. I just wanted to tell you to hang in there and fight with your stamina of old.

However, Lytle eventually lost his battle and passed away in 1987. His photograph and Bronze Star citation are now on display at the Submarine Force Library & Museum; George Washington Lytle is the only African American submariner to be so honored. This came about because of pressure placed on the museum by Lytle's friends and fellow stewards to see that not only would Lytle be honored but also that the contribution of men of the steward's branch as a whole would be recognized. They picked a good man to represent them.