

USS ALBACORE (AGSS 569)

NEWSLETTER # 37

November 2011

Dear Shipmate,

On 17 September, NAVSEA conducted its annual inspection of Albacore. The discrepancies noted on last year's inspection had been corrected. There were no significant discrepancies noted this year. PPMMA is waiting for the official NAVSEA report. Well done goes to Jim Wakefield and the other PPMMA members who prepared for the inspection and who guided the NAVSEA inspector through the boat.

John Maier, Executive Director of the Park, reported that profits from museum store sales during the 25th anniversary Open House on 20 August just about equaled the cost of putting on the Open House. He also reported that museum store sales have doubled in the past year. John won't take a bow for these achievements, but he is the one who deserves the credit.

The PPMMA Board has several major projects under consideration. The first is the relocation/revamping of the large Albacore Park signs located on Market Street and on the By-Pass road. They have moved the Market Street sign to the other side of the bridge for better visibility and will preserve the structure and update the sign with new panels adding more information about the Park. They also want to relocate the sign on the By-Pass so that it will sit off the bow of the boat instead of at the closed southern entrance to the Park. This sign also would be preserved and have new information added. The second project is to increase security within the Park. Several instances of vandalism in the Memorial Garden and inside the boat itself are driving factors. Under consideration is the installation of video cameras to monitor the Memorial Garden, the interior of the museum building and inside the boat itself. Each of these projects is costly and may be done in stages as funds permit.

The State of NH DOT named a Chicago based contractor as the winner for the rebuilding of the downtown Memorial Bridge. The winning bid was the more expensive one but was judged to give the State the best value by virtue of coming in \$10M below the State's estimate and finishing in July 2013, a year earlier than projected. The Memorial Bridge has been closed to vehicular traffic due to its deteriorated condition. It is still open to pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

The large wooden model of Phase 4 Albacore that resides in the museum may be relocating. The model was made and donated by Mr. R.A. Marcoux, a shop superintendent at the shipyard. At one time, the model was going to the lobby of the new wing at the Portsmouth Regional Hospital. The idea was to suspend the model from the ceiling with a slight down angle as if it was in a diving turn. This proved to be too challenging structurally and that effort ended. A second possibility was the Seabrook Visitors Center but a custody agreement satisfactory to both parties could not be reached. Following an inquiry from the curator of the shipyard museum, the current plan is to permanently transfer custody of the model to that museum. Given the relationship of the model builder, the submarine and the shipyard, it would be an appropriate move. A transfer agreement has been drawn up and approved by the shipyard and PPMMA. The transfer date is 28 November. Moving this large model will expand the available display space within the Park's museum building.

The Friends of Albacore were invited by George Milliken from the local Portsmouth Masonic Lodge to make a presentation on who we (FOA) are and what we do. (George worked at the museum this summer spelling John Maier a couple of days a week.) Butch Jordan and I accepted the invitation and set about coming up with what we hoped would be a suitable presentation. Each drafted what we thought were salient points and then exchanged our ideas. The final product consisted of 30 power point slides plus another ten pages of additional talking points. On 10 October, we traveled to Portsmouth and met with George for a tour of their historic building followed by a dinner and our presentation. Several in the audience were past members of the shipyard work force and contributed many an interesting recollection of an event or construction situation on Albacore as we told our story. At the close of the presentation, we were presented with a very generous check for the Friends fund. Our thanks to George and the masons of St. Andrew's Lodge No. 56 in Portsmouth for an enjoyable evening. Butch and I have adopted the motto - "Have Presentation, Will Travel" (within reason).

At the Submarine Museum in Groton, there is a large display case of submarine models that trace the development of the submarine from John Holland's SS-1 of 1900 through the Virginia class of today. The Groton division of Electric Boat made all these models. In that display, Albacore only appears once and that is in her Phase 1 configuration. An Albacore shipmate has a contact in the SupShip office at EB that may be in a position to have additional models of Albacore produced that would show her in several of her later configurations - perhaps even showing the Phase 3 dive brakes. If/when anything changes, we will let you know.

Louis 'Chip' Messina has an email of "mr.chips04@verizon.net". Stan Isquith has relocated to 702 Solitude Point Avenue, Henderson, NV 89012 and has a new email of "stanisquith@gmail.com". Bob Noble has a new email of "bobnoble732@hughes.net". Fred Saunders has a new email of "albacore569@verizon.net".

Shipmate Jim Goode reports he just found out that EN1(SS) Tom Lawn passed away in 1961. Tom was an auxiliary man who worked for Steve Cinfo.

If you would like to attend a Friends of Albacore meeting, the next one is scheduled for 1100 on Saturday, December 10th in the museum building at Albacore Park. All are welcome.

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 be 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, have a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas and a safe New Year.

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