

MILITARY SEA SERVICES MUSEUM, INC.



SEA SERVICES SCUTTLEBUTT

August 2013

A message from the President



Tony LaMorte

Summer is just about over and another year for school children to be all over the place. So once again I urge everyone to pay attention while driving. You never know when they will pop out in front of you.

The Board of Directors and I would like to acknowledge and give a big thank you to those who donated money to buy chairs for the Flag/Dining room. Initially, we went for 50 chairs. However, the generosity of our members, many of whom purchased multiple chairs and donated to the Museum's operating fund, we were able to go for 60. The new chairs have given the Flag/Dining room a more finished appearance, and we no longer have any of the old, dilapidated chairs anywhere in the Museum.

OUR SINCERE THANKS TO:

VADM J. Sagerholm
Mr. & Mrs. A. La Morte
Mr. & Mrs. J Cecil
Mobility Express of Sebring
Mrs. L. Kahn
CAPT & Mrs J. Lyons
Mr. & Mrs. J. Crowning
Mr. & Mrs W. Fincke
Mr. J. Baize
Mr. J. Philips
Dylan Kissner

Mr. D. Martin
Mr. & Mrs R. Soop
Mr& Mrs J. Kimm
Mr. L. Mingadcri
Ms. E. Thornburg
Mr. & Mrs. R. Herms
Mr. & Mrs. S. Stowers
Mr. & Mrs. J. Bimler
Mr. W. Richard
Mr. & Mrs. E Kissner, Jr.
Mason Kissner

Mr. & Mrs. E. Kissner
Mr. & Mrs. A. Farmer
COL G. Kimm, USA
Mr. R. Mesecher
Mr. C. Howerton
Mr. & Mrs. R. Volz
Mr. & Mrs. A. Orsini
Mr. & Mrs. F. Julianno
Mr. & Mrs. W. Earle
Mr. & Mrs. G. Kissner

Tony

Military Sea Services Museum
1402 Roseland Avenue, Sebring,
Florida, 33870 Phone: (863) 385-0992
E-Mail: navmargrd@gmail.com

Hours of Operation
Open: Wednesday through Saturday
Noon to 4:00 p.m.
Web site: <http://milseasvcmuseum.org/>

Welcome Aboard New Members

On 26 June 2013, Claude Howerton signed up for a one year membership. Claude is retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He is also a former Highlands County Commissioner and a past Exalted Ruler of the Sebring Elks Lodge. Claude lives in Sebring.

On 9 Aug 2013, Lester Lob signed up for a one year membership. Lester is a retired manager, He lives in Sebring.

A very hearty welcome aboard to our newest members! A sincere thank you to all our members for their continued support. Without member support, the Museum would not be able to pay its bills and would have to close the doors.

Quotable Quotes

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all. ---Dale Carnegie

When the people fear their Government, there is tyranny; when the Government fears the people, there is liberty. ---Thomas Jefferson

The greatest danger to our American freedoms is a Government that ignores the Constitution.
---Thomas Jefferson

Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it. ---Ronald Reagan



VIP VISITORS

On 26 September several USS TERROR crew members and their wives will visit the Museum.

They will leave their joint reunion with USS RANDOLPH at Indian Rocks Beach, FL about 0900 and should arrive at the Museum around 1130. After a light lunch, the group will tour the Museum, spending as much time as they desire. This is an opportunity for our local members to meet a modest, fun loving group of WWII heroes and their wives. The camaraderie that still exists in this group will be obvious to all. Please attend if you can.

We were very pleased that San Antonio, TX Museum member Doc Savage and his friend, Edith Wheeler joined us for our monthly dinner in July. Doc has been a long-time member and generous supporter of the Museum.

Anniversaries

4 Aug 1790. Congress creates the U.S. Revenue Marine, later the U.S. Coast Guard.

2 Aug 1943. PT-109, commanded by LT John F. Kennedy, was rammed and sunk in the Solomon Islands.

6 Aug 1945. First atomic bomb "Little Boy" dropped from B-29 named Enola Gay on Hiroshima, Japan.

9 Aug 1945. Second atomic bomb "Fat Man" dropped from B-29 named Bock's Car on Nagasaki, Japan.

14 Aug 1945. Japanese agreed to unconditionally surrender.

4 Aug 1947. Navy Medical Service Corps established.

23 Sep 1779. CAPT John Paul Jones aboard Bon Homme Richard tells HMS Serapis: "I have not yet begun to fight!"

17 Sep 1787. U.S. Constitution Approved.

10 Sep 1813. Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry commanding his squadron from the USS NIAGARA defeated and captured the entire British squadron in the Battle of Lake Erie.

14 Sep 1814. "Star Spangled Banner" written by Francis Scott Key

2 Sep 1945. V-J Day. President Truman declares victory. The Japanese sign formal surrender documents..

18 Sep 1947. U.S. Air Force Established.

11 Sep 2011. Islamic Terrorist attack the Pentagon and the World Trade Center.

11 Sep 2011. Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance. U.S. Flag to be flown at half mast sunrise to sunset.

20 Sep 2011. National POW/MIA Recognition Day. Established by Congress in 1979. Observed annually on the third Friday of September.



Mason and Dylan Kissner, visiting from Illinois, try out the chairs donated in their names.

Dear Editor,

When last we corresponded, we discussed briefly, the sinking of *DD-61* by the German U-Boat *U-53*. A single torpedo fired at a miraculous distance scored a direct hit sending the *Jones* to the bottom in a matter of minutes and her captain, LCDR David Bagley adrift in a lifeboat. The following will give us a brief glimpse of *U-53* and her captain Kapitanleutnant Hanse Rose.

USS Jacob Jones and U-53

October 7, 1916 was a fine, crisp autumn morning on the New England coast. All was quiet on the military front as United States was at peace with the world. World War I was being fought primarily in the trenches of Europe and on the seas surrounding the continent. The United States had, of course, the great barrier of the Atlantic Ocean enabling it to remain neutral.

During the mid-forenoon, the German U-boat *U-53* made landfall off Nantucket. Surfacing, the sub passed the old lightship, skirted Batemans Reef and proceeded on its way to the harbor. The sight of a submarine in that immediate area was a common occurrence since the nearby Naval Base was home to several of these boats. If any noticed the German Battle Ensign fluttering at the stern, no alarm was raised. Proceeding on to the narrow harbor entrance, Rose corrected course making for Goat Island where staring directly at Newport Naval base, he dropped anchor.



***German Submarine
U-53 Crew***

With his boat secured Captain Rose donned his best tunic, called for his skiff and was off to the beach to make the obligatory courtesy call to the senior officer present. The recipients of this visit would be Rear Admiral Knight, commander of the Newport Naval District, followed by a call on Rear Admiral Gleaves, Commander Destroyer Flotilla. While these formalities were taking place things were busy elsewhere. The German U-boat crew was enjoying a well-earned liberty on dry land and were well received by the personnel at the Naval Station. At a completely different level frantic efforts were being made to decode instructions from Washington on handling a German submarine in the midst of a U.S. Naval Base.

Meanwhile at the base a basic question remained unanswered, namely what is the purpose of *U-53*'s unlikely visit. To this Capt. Rose simply responded that his mission was to deliver a letter from his superiors to the German ambassador to the United States. Unlikely as this sounded it was delivered with a straight face and that was that.

As the day wore on Capt. Rose proved to be a genial host as the Admirals toured *U-53*. Later in the day as the idle chatter turned to other subjects, such as internment of foreign vessels the U-boat skipper recalled his crew from liberty and decided to call it a day. As the American Naval dignitaries cast a backward glance at the intruding submarine they watched as Rose weighed anchor and made for the open sea. There can be no question that the US naval officers breathed a sigh of relief and trusted that *U-53* was homeward bound for Germany.

If Newport had a restful night their hopes would be shattered the next morning when a radio transmission was received from an American ship just outside the three mile limit. The message was brief and angry. The ship, a neutral American ship, had been stopped by a German U-boat, searched, papers examined, ships officers interrogated and when no contraband was found the vessel was permitted to go on its way.

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Shortly after noon *U-53* was heard from yet again. This steamship *West Point* was sunk off Nantucket. This was followed in succession by four British, a Dutch and a Norwegian vessel. The procedure was the same in every instance. The vessels were stopped in international waters, inspected and determined to have contraband and passengers were then permitted to take to the boats as the offending vessel was sunk.

When the first alarm was sounded destroyers were immediately dispatched to the scene. As the devastation occurred outside the three-mile limit in international waters and the United States being neutral, the only course open to the American ships was limited to recovering survivors tossing about in boats and rafts. Throughout the entire proceedings there were no human casualties from any vessel involved.



*Photo of German U-53
Capt. Hanse Rose*

The events of the day were celebrated by the German propaganda machine as a great victory while the Allied press presented it as an example of the atrocities committed by the savage Huns.

U-53 served throughout WW I and surrendered to the Allies in November 1918. During her combat life the boat amassed an amazing record of 87 ships sunk with 224, 314 tons destroyed and over 46,000 tons in damaged vessels. To this list must, of course, be added the USS *Jacob Jones* sunk December 6, 1917.

Her captain Hanse Rose retired from naval service shortly before the Armistice on August 17, 1918. He surfaced briefly in 1940 for a very short time, in charge of Training U-boats crews in World War II. He died December 16, 1969 in Germany at age 84.

While the events of December 6, 1917 were definitely tragic, no responsibility could be assigned to LCDR. David Worth Bagley or any of his crew. Bagley continued his naval career and served with distinction through WW II. He retired in 1946 with the rank of Admiral. He died in 1960 at San Diego aged 77.

The Bagley name has graced four U.S. Navy ships. Three ships, Torpedo Boat 24, DD 185 and DD 386 were named for the Spanish American war hero Ensign Worth Bagley. The fourth honored both Ensign Worth Bagley and his brother, Admiral David Worth Bagley.

Allie

Thank You

Thank you American Legion Post 74 Riders of Sebring. Larry Roberts and Mathew Jordon representing Post 74 riders visited the Museum and donated a nicely framed Birthday Greetings to the U.S. Coast Guard. The Birthday Greetings will be permanently displayed in the Museum.

"Highlands Today", our local newspaper, published an excellent story of the presentation of the Nazi Banner that had flown at Hitler's mountain retreat to the Military Sea Services Museum. Access the article via the link below.

<http://highlandstoday.com/hi/local-news/late-world-war-ii-soldiers-family-attends-banner-donation-20130626/>



Shown with the banner, L to R, is Jim Hummell, who was instrumental in locating banner signers family members, and Museum members Gene Kissner, John Cecil, Tony LaMorte and Jerry Kimm.

Did You Know That

The U.S. Navy only ever had one Admiral of the Navy. By Congressional Act of 24 March 1903, Admiral George Dewey was promoted to Admiral of the Navy with date of rank of 2 March 1899. Admiral of the Navy Dewey held this rank until his death on 16 January 1917.