



Hooter Hilites

A Publication of the USS Sea Owl Association
Web Site: <http://home.earthlink.net/~purtellr/index.html>
We still give a hoot!
June 2003 Issue



President's Message

Shipmates & 1st Mates,

The Sea Owl Association donated \$200 in April 2003 to the Chief John Frederickson Memorial Fund. As you may remember, Chief Frederickson and his wife perished in the fire at a night club in West Warwick, RI. Your donation has helped USSVI raise over \$20,000 toward establishing a scholarship fund for the Chief's children. Well done shipmates !!!

Summer Picnic, Groton, Connecticut

The Sea Owl summer picnic reunion was held on Saturday, June 7, 2003, in Groton, Connecticut. Despite the occasional rain, the catered affair, arranged by Shipmate Ed Welch CS 66-69 and his wife Paulette, was a huge success. Raffle prizes were awarded, including a beautiful Sea Owl throw blanket, which was designed by Pat and Henry Fulkoski, and which is also available for

The Silent Service

A Submarine At Sea Is A Different World In Herself
And The Men Who Take Such Ships To Sea
Are An Elite Group
We Demonstrated A Special Cohesiveness And Interdependence
While Confined To The Innards Of The
USS Sea Owl
While Relying On Each Other
To Do It Properly The First Time, We All Returned Home

**DIESEL BOATS
U.S. NAVY
BEST SERVICE
FOREVER**

individual purchase at a cost of \$42.00. These throws are 70" long by 48" high and created by Hudson & Co. It is 100% cotton, tapestry woven in the USA, preshrunk, colorfast and machine washable. We think Henry and Pat did a great job on designing it. You may contact "Ski" at: Henry E. Fulkoski, 8301 Loblolly Lane, Pasadena, MD 21122; telephone: (410) 437-4551; hfulkoski@aol.com

Shipmate John Bergren ST 52-53 donated a "Welcome Aboard" (with silver dolphins emblem) doormat as a raffle item. John tells us that he won the doormat at a USSVI Convention maybe 25 years ago; he thinks it was in Washington, he's not certain. There were many of the same faces in attendance, but there were a couple of new participants, such as Bob and Carol D'Amico and their son Nolan, from Brooklyn, New York, and the Mahans from California who were in the Boston area to attend a family wedding and stayed another week to attend Friday night's buffet, the

Saturday picnic, and the Sunday brunch before returning to California.



Shipmates attending 2003 Picnic in Groton, Connecticut

Those in group picture, left to right: Standing: Henry Fulkoski EN 68 -69; John Bergren ST 52-53; Bill Whitelaw LTjg 54 -56; Ed Bess EM 64-69; Bob Hughes EN 59-61 & 66-67; Jim Madigan FT 68-69; Don Schoolcraft EM 65; Don Gregg QM 63-68; Bob Kreeger TM 50-54; Gib Hanley TM 49-51; Al Stevens EM 67 -69; Frank Limpert QM 47-51; Jack Mahan TM 61-63; Herb Hawes IC 66-67; Jack Empie EN 62-64 & 66-69

Kneeling in front, left to right: Ed Welch CS 66 -69; Bob D'Amico SN 68-69; John Souza YN 51-53; Roy Purtell TM 66-69; Ken Nichols TM 66 -68; Jim Grilli MM 62-63; Mike Polhemus SO 56-57; Ken Johnson LTjg 62 -65



First mates attending 2003 Picnic in Groton, Connecticut

Left to right: Annette Bess, Pat Fulkoski, Alma Limpert, Lorna Nichols, Carol Purtell, Paulette Welch, Marlene Mahan, Betty Gregg, Marilyn Whitelaw, Denise Stevens, Dianne Hawes, Betty Hughes and Carol D'Amico

Ship's Store

A new item has been added to the Ship's Store. As seen in the picture below, these coffee mugs should be on everyone's table and they make for a great gift. They can be purchased at a cost of \$7.00 each (plus \$3.00 shipping), or 2 for \$12.00 (plus \$3.00 shipping).



Your Ship's Store also has ball caps and shirts. Contact Storekeeper Ed Welch, 33 Waco Court, Groton, CT 06340 or telephone (860) 446-9104 for availability of items.

USSVI National Convention in Reno, Nevada

September 2 – 6, 2003

We are expecting a group of Sea Owl shipmates to gather at the USSVI/WWII SubVets National Convention in Reno, Nevada, in September this year. Tom Moniz, EM 62-66, has reserved 20 rooms at the Sands Regency Hotel and Casino at a reduced rate of \$44.27, including tax. Call 1-800-648-3553 and be sure to mention the group code, SEA902, to reserve your room from 9/2-9/5/03. There will also be a hospitality room for Sea Owl sailors at the Sands Regency. For a list of those shipmates planning to attend, you may contact Tom Moniz at (916) 682-9306 or online at tmoniz@lanset.com.

Avery Point Lighthouse

The Sea Owl Association, in continuing to support items in and around Groton, Connecticut, has donated \$100.00 to the "Buy a Brick" campaign for the Avery Point Lighthouse. We have purchased two bricks at \$50.00 each; one brick to be inscribed to remember the USS Sea Owl, the other brick, to remember our WWII Shipmates. That brick will be in memory of the USS Perch SS 176. This is part of a project undertaken by the USSVI Groton Base to remember lost boats. More on the USS Perch can be found in another article in this Newsletter.

From the Editor

You will notice this issue of "Hooter Hilites" has a distinctly international flavor. This is because your "Hooter Hilites" editor spent two weeks visiting the United Kingdom in May and thought you might be interested in learning more about what it is like to meet other submariners and have a chance to exchange stories and memories. Your comments, suggestions and ideas for future issues are always welcome. This is, after all, your newsletter and I want it to be interesting and informative to all shipmates. So many of you have come up to me at St. Mary's, the recent Groton picnic and many have responded via e-mail and other means to say how much they like the newsletter.

Please send suggestions, comments, complaints, etc. to:

Ken Johnson
P.O. Box 561
Oakham, MA 01068
e-Mail: JAMGraphic@aol.com

E-mail online

If you are online, but are no longer receiving e-mail messages from

Roy, let him know. He has updated his e-mail program and may have lost some e-mail addresses in the process.

Eastern Approaches

Book review by Ken Johnson

This month, with so many to choose from, I finally decided to write a review of a book that I first read many years ago as a young Lieutenant aboard the USS Halfbeak. The book is called "Eastern Approaches" and it was written and first published in 1949 by Fitzroy MacLean (later Sir Fitzroy). I was reminded of it recently while visiting Edinburgh, Scotland on a tour just prior to attending the ISA Chatham convention. Our tour guide was talking about Ian Fleming and mentioned that Fitzroy MacLean was allegedly the inspiration for Fleming's James Bond character.

Fitzroy has denied being the "real James Bond", but his story is a fascinating, true account of his experiences as a British diplomat in the Soviet Union in the late 1930's, his adventures as part of a SAS unit in North Africa behind Rommel's lines in the early 40's and his mission as a personal representative of Winston Churchill in Yugoslavia from 1943 until the end of WW II. His stories about "ditching" his NKVD "traveling companions" while visiting areas of the Soviet Union considered strictly off-limits to foreigners are incredible and show a high degree of bravery by this man. His later exploits in North Africa reminded me of the old TV series, "Rat Patrol". He was parachuted into Yugoslavia in 1943 with the mission from Churchill to "find out which partisan groups were killing the most Germans" so that Britain could send them aid. He joined up with Tito and began a long relationship with the man who would rule Yugoslavia in post-war years.

At the time I read this book back in the 60's, it was part of a Time Reading Plan selection offered quarterly, as I recall, by Time-Life Books. Having lost my copy over the years, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that it had been reprinted in 1991 by Penguin Books and is available from Amazon.com. Amazon reviews are virtually all 5-star with comments like "most exciting book I have ever read". I have to agree. You would have to look far to find a more exciting true adventure.

Sir Fitzroy MacLean later served as Under-Secretary for War in the Churchill and Eden governments and as a Member of Parliament for over thirty years. In addition to this book, he has also written several books on Scottish and Russian history. He died on June 15, 1996. His was a truly extraordinary life.

Galley Stirrings

This month's recipe, **Asparagus and Cheese Omelet**, is not from Ed Welch's Recipe card file. Let's just call it an "Editor's Choice" recipe to take advantage of the availability of fresh asparagus in the markets and to offer a recipe with options for those who may be watching their cholesterol intake:

Ingredients

1 carton Egg Beaters
6 teaspoon size dollops Healthy Choice cream cheese
6 medium size fresh asparagus spears
1 tablespoon Olivio or other low cholesterol butter substitute
1 tablespoon grated, smoked cheddar (optional)

Directions

Cut asparagus spears in 1" lengths. Place in steamer basket and steam until just tender. Heat griddle and melt Olivio. Shake "egg" carton and pour over heated griddle. Add cream cheese dollops, spreading evenly. Spread asparagus pieces evenly over the surface. Grate smoked cheddar over the top. Fold edges over, turn when ready and complete cooking. Enjoy!

The Egg Beaters are fat free, cholesterol free, low sodium and are a 99% real egg product. One carton is equivalent to 4eggs. The Healthy Choice cream cheese is fat free and low in cholesterol and sodium. Olivio is low in saturated fat, contains no cholesterol and is also low in sodium. Other butter substitutes are similar. Of course, you can use real eggs, cream cheese and butter, if you prefer. You can also experiment with various flavored cream cheeses. Remember though: none of us are as young as we used to be and some of our parts don't work as well as they once did, but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy some of the finer tastes of life.

Visiting Great Britain

By Ken Johnson

In May, prior to attending the International Submariner 40th convention at Chatham, I took a ten day "Taste of Britain" tour. I had visited Great Britain only twice before, the first time when I flew to Scotland and on to Belfast and Londonderry to meet my new duty station, USS Halfbeak, in 1965. The second time was later in 1965 during a brief call at Portsmouth on Halfbeak, mainly to top off fuel. During that stopover, I was able to take a train into London and spend a day seeing some of the sights.

This tour started at London and made a loop up through the west, visiting places like Stonehenge, Stratford, Bath, Chester and other cities and towns. After two days in Edinburgh, it then went down the east coast visiting places like York, Cambridge and London again. Being from New England, I couldn't help but feel at times that I was still at home with road signs bearing the names of so many familiar cities and towns. There are "Old" versions like York and London of "New" cities in the US and rivers, like the Thames which also carry over into the "New" World. Aside from the fact that they drive on the wrong side of the road and drive funny little toy cars, there is so much to remind you of the US and especially New England.

Why do they drive such strange, little cars though? You might think that the posted gasoline prices were cheap compared to the US until you realize that the prices are in pence per liter. The 80 for unleaded regular converts to just over \$5.00 per US gallon! Think of that the next time you pull up to a gas pump here and complain about prices still well under \$2.00 in most places.

What really struck me on this trip was how much the US is appreciated for what we did for them in World War II. We passed statues of Eisenhower and Roosevelt which stand in parks in London and in St. Paul's Cathedral there is a section devoted to the memory of 22,000 Americans who gave their lives in the defense of Britain during World War II. This is in a part of the sanctuary that was destroyed by Nazi bombs and the people of Britain would accept no money from the US to construct it. The only thing they would accept was a book listing the names of these Americans which is placed on the altar.

Personally, I like to visit places where I feel welcome. While some of the food there (like haggis) you may find disgusting, it is nice to try something different than the normal McDonalds or Burger King fare. Sure, you can find them there, along with Starbucks (250 Starbucks in London alone), but London in particular has just about any kind of restaurant you could imagine.

Maybe we didn't join the Submarine Navy to see the world, but I know that many shipmates out there travel the world now that you are retired. Why not share some of your experiences with your shipmates in future issues? More stories of trips taken while on Sea Owl are welcome as well. I have many pictures that I have

received from shipmates, but few stories to go along with them. Don't be bashful! We can leave out the really incriminating stuff.

Mobile Reunion, October 7-12, 2003

Included with this edition of Hooter Hilites is an agenda and a reunion registration form for the Sea Owl's upcoming reunion to be held in Mobile, Alabama, October 7-12, 2003. We are hoping that everyone who can make it to Mobile, AL, will help us celebrate another yearly reunion. Please include the registration form with your check to John Leers. If there are any questions, don't hesitate to call Roy or John.

More information on the Mobile Reunion can be found on the Sea Owl website. Those of you who receive your Newsletter via Ken's electronic distribution can print the agenda and registration form from this page.

http://home.earthlink.net/~purtellr/Text/Mobile_reunion2003.html

Subvettes

Our own Shipmate Raymond (Rocky) Rockers EN 56-58 has taken on the job of Acting District 10 Commander of USSVI. Rocky's latest news is the formation of a ladies auxiliary for USSVI. Ella Blado, wife of D4 Dennis Blado, has formed the "USSVI SUBVETTES" Ladies Auxiliary and is now its National President with a Charter as provided for under the USSVI Bylaws.

More information can be obtained from the following site:

<http://www.ussvi.org/news/030626.htm>

Those of you not online can get more information or a registration form from: Carol Boyle, 2541 Tarkiln Oaks Drive, Pensacola, FL 32506

Last Man's Bottle

Included is a picture of an unopened bottle of Gin given to the Sea Owl Association at our reunion last year in St. Marys, GA, by Shipmate Frank Limpert QM 47-51, who purchased it in St. Thomas in 1949 or 1950. It is encased within a glass covered box, which was given to Roy Purtell by Shipmate Stan Ainley MM 44-49.

Shipmate Tom Gilbert has contacted the distributor of Gordon's Gin. They have taken a very keen interest in this bottle. They may even attend our reunion in Mobile just to view it. There is some indication that they may request it for their museum.

Our thanks to Frank (for not drinking it); our thanks to Stan for the perfect container to keep it in; and our thanks to Tom Gilbert for coming up with the idea to preserve it for our last remaining Sea Owl Association members to enjoy.

Hooter Hilites is a quarterly publication of the USS Sea Owl Association. Issues are published in March, June, September and December.

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Secretary/Treasurer – John Leers, 1453 Marty Drive, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068 - 2425, (614) 866-3707

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The 40's

June 2003 Issue



Brick for Perch

As previously mentioned, the Avery Point Lighthouse Society in New London is in the process of restoring this historic lighthouse.



As a fund raising effort relating to this project they are selling inscribed memorial bricks for a walkway around the lighthouse. To honor one of the WW II lost boats,

your Sea Owl Association has chosen to sponsor a brick for the USS Perch (SS 176). Perch, a Porpoise Class submarine, was built by Electric Boat and commissioned Nov 19, 1936. She spent the year preceding the war in operations around the Philippines. The outbreak of hostilities found Perch in Cavite Navy Yard. She took part in the rush to clear the Navy Yard 10 December and watched, at close range, the destruction of Cavite by bombers. Following this, she conducted a war patrol off Luzon, Formosa and Hong Kong.

Perch was lost on her second war patrol on March 3, 1942 while on patrol in the Java Sea. I will not go into detail about the events which led to the loss of Perch which included severe depth charging from several Japanese destroyers in water less than 200 feet in depth. The end finally came for her as described in the following account.

On trying to dive before sunrise on 3 March 1942, it was found that, due to the severe depth charge attacks she had been through, water poured in from Conning Tower and Engine Room hatches, the three-inch circulating water line and leaks in the hull. Nothing the crew did seemed to help the leakage and while further attempts were being made to repair the boat, three enemy destroyers came in sight and opened fire. The submarine's gun was inoperative and torpedoes could not be fired. Enemy depth charges had caused three of Perch's torpedoes to run in their tubes, and the heat, exhaust gases and mounting nervous tension aggravated already extremely difficult conditions. The decision was made to abandon and scuttle her. The entire crew got into the water safely, and all were picked up by Japanese ships.

Most of the crew were taken to the Japanese prison camp at Ofuna, Japan, questioned there and then were sent to the Ashio mines, where they were forced to work until the close of the war. While fifty-three of their number were received from the Japanese at the war's end, eight died in the prison camp or in the mines. In sponsoring a brick in the Avery Point Lighthouse walk, we honor all those brave men who served aboard.

We pay particular respect to these eight men who made the ultimate sacrifice:

Warren I. Atkeison, TM2; Charles N. Brown, MM1; Philip J. Dewes, PhM; Houston E. Edwards, EMC; John Greco, TM1; Frank E. McCreary, MM1; Robert W. Osborne, S1; Robert A. Wilson, FC1

Sailors, rest your oars. We will not forget you.

Bernard A. "Ben" Bastura

by Ken Johnson

What do you say about a national treasure lost? Much has already been written about this man and his devotion to preserving the artifacts and history of the submarine force.



I first met Ben Bastura in September 2002 when I visited his private submarine museum and library in Middletown, CT. Sadly, this gentle soul left us, way too soon, on March 29th to join so many of those he admired on "eternal patrol". To those who ever met him and got to know him, Ben was truly one of a kind. His lifetime ambition was to be a museum curator and he achieved this ambition in a way that few have ever done. Ben's training as a museum curator, as he once told me, was the "school of hard knocks". If something didn't work out quite right, he would just try it over again until he was satisfied he got it right.

What perhaps few know about him is that Ben once put together and in 1981 published a "History of U. S. Submarine Veterans World War II". Since this was published by the Submarine Library & Museum of Middletown, CT, I have to assume that he published it with his own funds and sold them at his museum.

Some day there will be a brick in the Avery Point Lighthouse walk in memory of BERNARD A BASTURA, SS MUSEUM CURATOR donated by his friends. I am proud to include myself as one of them.



The 50's

June 2003 Issue



Dick Boyle and the USS X-1

By Ken Johnson

The Chatham International Submariner Conference was my first opportunity to meet Shipmate Dick Boyle, Ljg 53-56, face to face. More interesting to me than his time aboard Sea Owl were his tales of what he did after leaving Sea Owl. Dick's next assignment after leaving the Owl was a 13 month stint as Engineer of the USS X-1 followed by 5 more months as O in C. To say that this was a challenging assignment is an understatement. As the X implies, the X-1 was an experimental design with a diesel engine meant to run on diesel fuel and hydrogen peroxide. It was built by Fairchild, a company better known for aircraft than submarines.

After I returned from Chatham, Dick sent me a copy of an article which he had written for the April 1972 issue of Naval Engineers Journal which described in detail the many trials and tribulations of getting this unusual power plant to work. This experiment with a hydrogen peroxide fueled submarine ended abruptly on May 20, 1957 with an explosion in the hydrogen peroxide stowage system that fortunately occurred alongside a pier at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard with no one aboard. The X-1 propulsion plant was changed to a more conventional design and it continued to be used for a variety of research and developmental projects until it was eventually retired from service. Today the USS X-1 rests peacefully on blocks outside the Submarine Force Library and Museum at Groton, CT. Many of the missions originally envisioned for craft such as the X-1 were likely performed in later years by the nuclear powered NR-1 whose story can now be read in the recently published book, "Dark Waters".

Dick Boyle went on to complete nuclear power training and served aboard the USS Skate (SSN 578). He left the Navy in 1961 and went on to work as a Research General Engineer at the Arctic Submarine Laboratory in San Diego, CA.

Barrier Sea Stories

(These stories come by way of Mike Polhemus (SO 54 - 57) from a time when Sea Owl, with its BQR-4 sonar, had as one of its primary missions the patrol of so called "choke points" through which Soviet Navy submarines had to pass. One such patrol area was the Greenland, Iceland, United Kingdom (GIUK) gap.)

The first trip of any note I remember taking with the new 'BQR-4A' was the Beruit "GIUK Gap nose count". We knew the "balloon had gone up" when XO announced 1) liberty was cancelled until further notice, 2) Each gang was to go up to Supply where we would a) be given all materials for which we had outstanding requisitions all ready in Supply and b) we would be allowed to roam the stock rooms get anything else we felt we needed for a "60 day period at sea", 3) Small groups were allowed to go home (or to the barracks - for single "pukes") to get enough clothes for a "60 day run" and we really knew "this was IT" when all the exercise shots were offloaded & "copper-nose" MK 14A's replaced them! We went up north near the Farø Islands where we

listened and snorkeled. We heard lots of stuff that none of us could identify but none of us had much of a positive idea as to what they were. I don't think any were subs. The two most memorable events of the trip were when we lost our "covertiness" and when a reserve officer went a little "over the edge".

When we snorkeled, the sonar "went blind"; all you could hear was diesel noise. So we left one man down in Sonar to "babysit" and the rest of us took various watches up in Control. We always kept someone on the AN/BLR-1/3 equipment scanning for transmissions. I think I intercepted the message on the AN/BLR-3 & it went something like this. "I say - did you see the whale" Answer: "Rather! Must be a Yank with something broke - can't imagine it's normal" (or words to that effect). We had lost our exhaust diffuser and our snorkel exhaust shot straight up into the air about 30 feet! We could see it in the scope and were painfully aware of the situation. So much for "covert operations"!

The incident with the reserve Lieutenant started in New London. I believe he was a Boston lawyer and had come aboard for his two week reserve "stint". The "balloon went up" while he was aboard and he requested and was granted permission to go north to the Faroes with us. Sea Owl's 27 MC (the interior communications circuit between Conn, Sonar & the Wardroom - plus a few other stations) worked different than other boat's. Sea Owl's Sonar 27MC was a "monitor hub" and if set up properly could monitor any transmission from any station - hearing conversations from both stations. We became aware of a series of rather strange conversations between the Lieutenant and the Captain over a succession of days. The Lieutenant would quote something that sounded to us like Shakespeare (we thought - since none of us recognized much of what was going on). I would suspect someone then in the Wardroom might have a better recollection of these exchanges since they would have the advantage of seeing - as well as hearing - not only the Captain's reaction but any "aside comments" he might make which wouldn't be picked up over the MC. The Lieutenant had the 1200-1600 watch and ate first Wardroom sitting; the Captain usually ate second sitting for that meal. I guess the Lieutenant and the Captain were fairly "tight" since someone said they were good card players (perhaps bridge but it could have been chess - for all I remember!) and we assumed that he & the Captain were exchanging some sort of friendly "code" - perhaps known only to them. This lasted a few days & got a bit "stranger" as time progressed. One day we heard the Lieutenant say "Wardroom - Captain - this is the Conn - - "Roses are red". We were now certain this had to be code! After a silence of quite a few seconds we heard the Captain say "Conn - Wardroom - this is the Captain - - Violets are blue". We stared at one another trying to make sense of this. Within a day or two the Lieutenant disappeared from the daily scene, didn't stand watches and spent the rest of the trip in his stateroom under some kind of sedation.



The 60's

June 2003 Issue



Chatham Convention

By Ken Johnson

As many of you already know, I attended my first International Submariner Association convention at Chatham, UK in May. One of the highlights of this for me was to finally get to meet my new Russian friend, Dmitry Zubkov and to finally meet Shipmate, Dick Boyle. Dick had met Dmitry at the ISA Convention in 1998 in the UK and over the years they developed a close friendship



Another highlight for me was to get Igor Kurdin to autograph my copy of "Hostile Waters" which he co-authored. Retired Soviet Navy Captain 1st

Rank Igor Kurdin (on the left in the picture) was executive officer of the Soviet ballistic missile submarine, K-219 just prior to the patrol when it was lost 300 miles from Bermuda in 1986. "Hostile Waters" is the K-219 story, a story of incredible courage and bravery. The other man holding the "Our Museum Can Sink Your Museum" T-shirt which I had given him, is Alexei Gakkel. The woman is Alexei's wife, Tatia. Alexei also autographed my book. He was First Mate of the Soviet container ship, "Anatoly Vasiliev" which rescued the K-219 crew before it sank. I had really hoped that Capt 1st Rank Igor Britanov would be at this convention as well so that I could meet him. Maybe next time I attend one of these I will get to meet him as well. Capt Britanov was CO of the K-219 and his personal bravery in this incident was only recently recognized by the Russian government.

International Submariner gatherings such as these are a fascinating experience. This was the 40th annual ISA convention and was attended by 144 submarine veterans from 15 different countries. In addition to some of the Russians, I made friends among the UK and German delegations and enjoyed their stories. The largest delegations were from the UK, US and Russia. Notable absences were the Chinese and Japanese, but perhaps they will attend in the future as well. The future sites for the next five years, as decided at this meeting by delegation heads, are Odessa, Ukraine in 2004, Argentina in 2005, St. Petersburg, Russia in 2006, Brest, France in 2007 and Poland in 2008. As of this writing, photos from the Chatham have not yet been posted, but are promised soon to be at www.submariners.org/home.htm.

Some of the follow-up information received from some of the folks I met at Chatham are a copy of Dick Boyle's article about the USS X-1 powerplant and information about the commercial submarine, "Auguste Picard" which was once commanded by Fred Wagner, one of the US delegation.

I hope that this will not be my last ISA convention and am already looking forward to 2006 and St Petersburg, Russia. Incidentally, I became a card-carrying member of the St. Petersburg Submariner's Club while at Chatham and look forward to the hospitality that they promise to extend to submariners who visit their city in the future.

Where Are They Now – Bruce Blessington

By Ken Johnson

Several weeks ago I received a phone message from one who identified himself as a "voice from your past". It was Bruce Blessington (QM 63 – 64) and we finally arranged to get together for lunch on April 17th. He gave me directions to his place of work at the former Ft. Devens site, a company called Bionostics. As I entered the main entrance, I noticed a sign which read, "Bionostics Welcomes Ken Johnson". "What a coincidence," I thought, but then when you have a common name as I do, you are not surprised by such things. As it turned out, however, it was intended for me! Bruce had failed to tell me that he was the President and CEO of the company. After a great personal, guided tour of his modern,



state of the art plant, we had lunch and a delightful chat. Bionostics is a fairly new and fast growing company, in business only since 1981 and Bruce is only its second President and

CEO. It is already the world's largest manufacturer of quality control material for the critical care industry. As you can see, Bruce has a picture of the Owl on the wall right next to his desk. It's nice to see that he remembers his humble beginnings as a Sea Owl sailor!

It is also nice to see a successful, fast growing high tech business that is contributing to the Massachusetts economy. We can use all of the companies like Bionostics we can get. (As a Massachusetts State employee, they help pay my salary!)

If you are interested in learning more about Bruce's company, check their Web site at www.bionostics.com.