

# USS BILLFISH (SSN 676)



**DECOMMISSIONING CEREMONY**

**1 JULY 1999**

**PUGET SOUND NAVAL SHIPYARD  
BREMERTON, WASHINGTON**

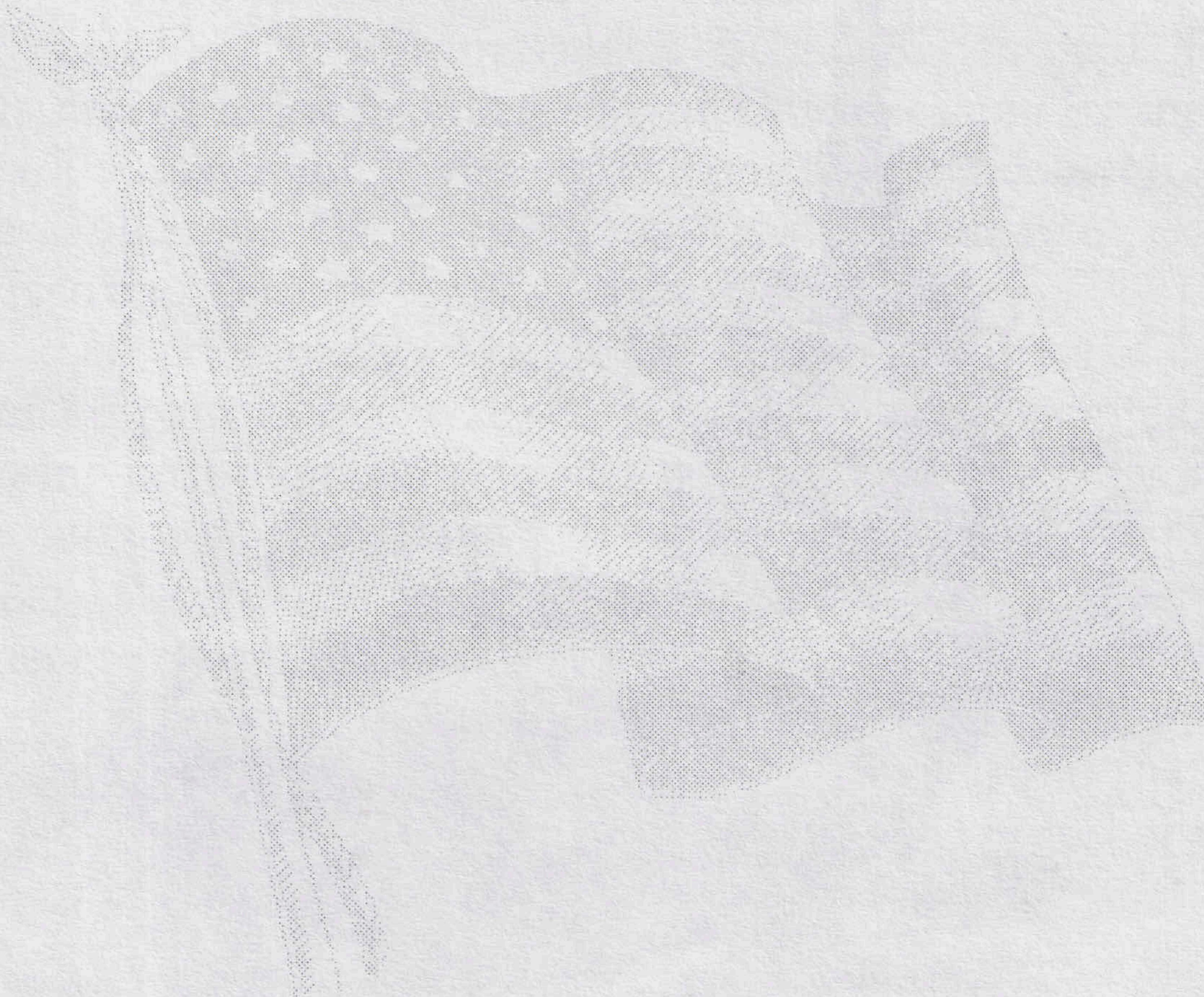
**USS BILLFISH (SSN 676)  
COMMANDING OFFICERS**

CDR R. M. Hughes	March 1971 - April 1973
CDR F. W. Butterworth III	April 1973 - April 1976
CDR D. Volgenau	April 1976 - April 1979
CAPT J. C. Okeson	April 1979 - April 1984
CAPT F. T. Jones	April 1984 - June 1987
CDR J. B. Luhan	June 1987 - February 1988
CDR G. W. Jackson	February 1988 - April 1988
CDR R. B. Glover	April 1988 - March 1991
CDR J. F. Graham	April 1991 - July 1993
CDR D. E. Rifkin	July 1993 - August 1995
CDR M. H. Haskin	August 1995 - March 1998
CDR J. G. Stevens	March 1998 - July 1999



## THE CEREMONY

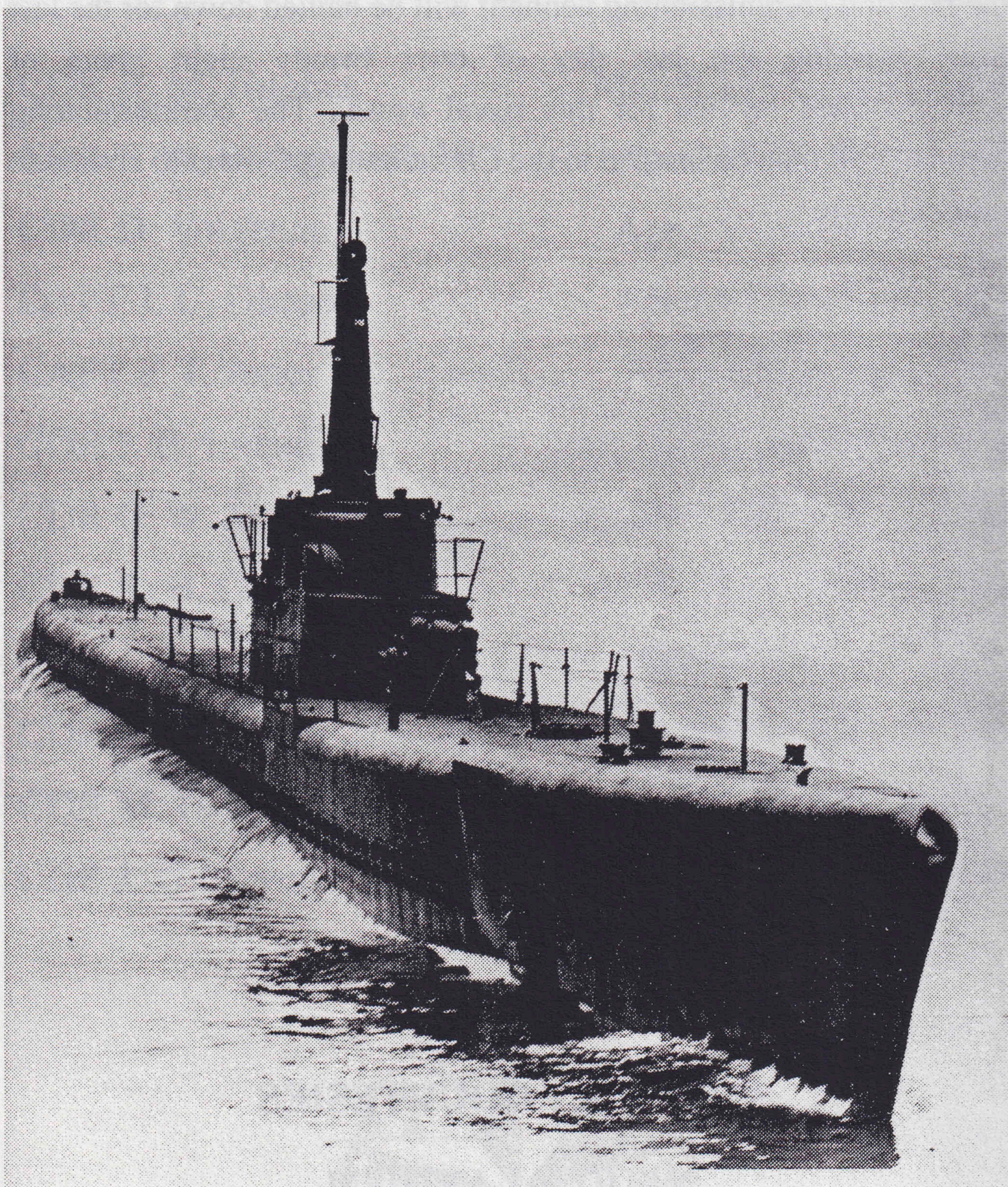
This ceremony is a formal military function, similar in many respects to the commissioning ceremony. At the end of the ceremony the flag and commissioning pennant will be hauled down for the last time, marking the last day of over twenty eight years of commissioned service for this naval vessel. The commissioning pennant will then be handed to the Commanding Officer to conclude the ceremony.



## MILITARY COURTESIES

### NATIONAL ANTHEM

If in uniform, salute if covered, stand at attention with arms at sides if uncovered. If in civilian clothing, the right hand will be placed over the heart, facing the flag.



## HISTORY OF THE FIRST USS BILLFISH

The first USS BILLFISH (SS 286) was laid down at Kittery, Maine, by the Portsmouth Navy Yard on 23 July 1942; launched on 12 November 1942; sponsored by Zelda L. Parks, the wife of LCDR Lewis Smith Parks; and commissioned on 20 April 1943. LCDR Frederic Colby Lucas, Jr. was the first Commanding Officer.


Following shakedown training off the east coast of the United States, she sailed via the Panama Canal for the southwest Pacific. She departed Brisbane, Australia fifty-six years ago for her first war patrol off the Netherland East Indies. LCDR Lucas commanded BILLFISH through two war patrols, sinking one merchant and was relieved on 8 January 1944 by LCDR Vernon Clark Turner.

LCDR Turner commanded BILLFISH through four war patrols, seeing action in both the South China Sea and Japanese home waters. He was credited with sinking one ship and damaging several others. Following BILLFISH's sixth patrol, she returned to San Francisco on 7 December 1944 for overhaul.

On 14 February 1945, LCDR Louis C. Farley, the Executive Officer on patrols five and six, relieved as Commanding Officer. Following post-overhaul refresher training in Hawaiian waters, she proceeded to the East China Sea for her seventh war patrol. During this patrol she claimed five ships sunk, two of which were confirmed by Japanese records. Later, during BILLFISH's eighth war patrol, this time back in Japan's home waters, she sank three more enemy vessels. During this patrol, the Pacific war came to an end and BILLFISH's own war career came to an end on 27 August 1945 upon her arrival in Pearl Harbor. She subsequently transited the Panama Canal, arriving in New Orleans in September 1945.

In October 1945, LCDR Philip Arthur Beshany relieved as Commanding Officer and BILLFISH conducted nine months of training and maneuvers in the Atlantic Fleet. Following an inactivation overhaul in Portsmouth, she was decommissioned in New London, Connecticut on November 1946. While in reserve there, she was reclassified AGSS 286 on 6 November 1962. Her name was stricken from the Navy list on 1 April 1968 and BILLFISH was scrapped.

BILLFISH received seven battle stars for her World War II service and was credited with sinking over 22,000 tons and damaging over 40,000 tons of enemy shipping.



## UNITED STATES SHIP BILLFISH (SSN 676)

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) is a nuclear powered submarine of the STURGEON class. Her keel was laid on 20 September 1968. Mrs. Philip A. Beshany, wife of the then Director of Submarine Warfare, Chief of Naval Operations welded her nickname, "Gigi", into the ship's keel that day. VADM Beshany was the Commanding Officer of the USS BILLFISH (SS 286) from 28 Oct 1945 to 20 Jun 1946. Launching occurred on 1 May 1970 at the Electric Boat Corporation in Groton, Connecticut, and she was commissioned 12 March 1971.

The ship's sponsor is Mrs. Francis Howell "Betty" Wheeler, wife of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the late General Earl G. Wheeler. She is a native of Brooklyn, New York and Greenwich, Connecticut. She has attended every change of command and continues to play an active role in the life of BILLFISH.

Upon commissioning, BILLFISH was assigned to Submarine Development Group TWO in Groton, Connecticut. She completed a Mediterranean Sea deployment and was awarded the Battle Efficiency "E" in 1973 and the Meritorious Unit Commendation for significant operational achievement during 1973 and 1974.

From January to December 1975, BILLFISH completed her first regular overhaul at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Following overhaul, she was assigned to Submarine Squadron TEN in Groton, Connecticut.

During June 1977, BILLFISH was one of two U.S. warships selected to participate in Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee Naval Review off Portsmouth, England. Between 1976 and 1981, BILLFISH completed three more Mediterranean Sea deployments (1976, 1979 and 1981) and was awarded the Battle Efficiency "E" in 1978, 1979 and 1981. Also during this time period, she was awarded two Anti-Submarine Warfare "A" awards and four consecutive Engineering Excellence "E" awards.

From May 1982 to November 1983, BILLFISH completed her second regular overhaul at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Following overhaul, BILLFISH returned to Submarine Squadron TEN and from September 1984 to March 1985 completed her fifth Mediterranean Sea deployment. In September 1986, BILLFISH participated in the major NATO submarine rescue exercise SORBET ROYAL in the Norwegian Sea and in 1987 participated in the first ever multi-national surfacing at the North Pole with USS SEA DEVIL (SSN 664) and HMS SUPERB (S 109).

In September 1988 BILLFISH transited to Charleston, South Carolina and was transferred to Submarine Squadron FOUR and in October commenced a refueling overhaul at Charleston Naval Shipyard. During the fall of 1989, BILLFISH weathered hurricane Hugo inside a flooded dry dock. The resulting effect was a two month delay in the completion of the overhaul.

BILLFISH completed overhaul in 1990 and, following post-overhaul shakedown and certifications, made her sixth Mediterranean Sea deployment in 1992. In 1994, Submarine Squadron FOUR was decommissioned and BILLFISH returned to Groton, Connecticut as a member of Submarine Squadron TWO. In 1995 she deployed to the Mediterranean Sea for two months in support of Operation SHARP GUARD.

In February 1997, BILLFISH left for her seventh and final six month deployment to the Mediterranean Sea and upon returning in August, was assigned to the re-commissioned Submarine Squadron FOUR in Groton, Connecticut. BILLFISH was subsequently awarded the 1997 Submarine Squadron FOUR Deck "D" for excellence in deck seamanship.

From September to October 1998, BILLFISH completed its final deployment under the ice en route to decommissioning at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, Washington.

# **USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) UNIT AWARDS**

**NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION  
1995**

**MERITORIOUS UNIT  
COMMENDATION  
1973 - 1974**

**BATTLE EFFICIENCY "E"  
1973 1976 1978 1979 1981 1985 1986**

**ENGINEERING "E"  
1976 1977 1978 1979**

**SUPPLY "E"  
1986 1996 1998**

**MEDICAL "M"  
1985**

**COMMUNICATION "C"  
1998**

**DAMAGE CONTROL "DC"  
1979**

**ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE  
"A"  
1978 1979 1985**

**DECK SEAMANSHIP "D"  
1997**



Rear Admiral Voelker, a native of Baltimore, Maryland, attended the United States Naval Academy and graduated with the class of 1972. Following a year of postgraduate school, he was awarded an M.S. degree and subsequently attended nuclear power and basic submarine training.

His operational tours include service in four attack submarines as a Division Officer in USS STURGEON (SSN 637), as Engineer in USS SEAHORSE (SSN 669), as Executive Officer of USS SAN FRANCISCO (SSN 711), and in command of USS HELENA (SSN 725) from 1987 to 1990. While under his command, HELENA conducted two extended Northern Pacific operations and a deployment to the Western Pacific. He served briefly as Deputy Commander of Submarine Squadron ONE and later commanded Submarine Group 7 in Yokosuka, Japan, with additional duty as Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Seventh Fleet (CTF 74) and Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (CTF 157). He relieved as Commander, Submarine Group NINE in July 1998.

Rear Admiral Voelker's shore duty assignments include service in the Bureau of Naval Personnel as the Submarine Department Head Assignment Officer, at Pacific Fleet Headquarters as Executive Assistant and Senior Naval Aide to the Deputy Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff, as a Division Director for the Director of Naval Intelligence in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, and most recently on the Joint Staff. While on the Joint Staff, Rear Admiral Voelker served as the Director of the Commander in Chief (CINC) Liaison Office and later as Executive Assistant to the Director of Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment (J8). He then served as Executive Assistant and Senior Military Aide to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from July 1997 to July 1998.

Rear Admiral Voelker has been awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with two Gold Stars in lieu of second and third awards, the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with three Gold Stars, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and various unit and service awards.

Rear Admiral Voelker is married to the former Diane Lynne Berner of Detroit, Michigan. They have three children: Timothy, Christopher, and Katherine.



**REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE E. VOELKER**  
**United States Navy**  
***Commander Submarine Group NINE***

# PROGRAM

**ARRIVAL OF OFFICIAL PARTY**

**INVOCATION**

**Lieutenant Commander Kent M**

**WELCOME REMARKS**

**Lieutenant Commander Jo**

**PRINCIPAL SPEAKER**

**Rear Admiral George**

**DECOMMISSIONING**

**Commander Jam**

**BENEDICTION**

**Lieutenant C**

**DEPARTURE**

# OF EVENTS

**McCord, CHC, USN**

**John A. Camara, USN**

**E. Voelker, USN**

**ING AND CLOSING REMARKS**  
**James G. Stevens, USN**

**Commander Kent McCord, CHC, USN**

**TURE OF OFFICIAL PARTY**



**COMMANDER JAMES G. STEVENS**  
United States Navy

Commander Stevens was born in Detroit, Michigan, and graduated from the Ohio State University in 1979 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering. He received his commission through the NROTC program. After completion of nuclear power and basic submarine training, he reported to USS JOHN MARSHALL (SSN 611) in July 1981. During this tour, he completed one Mediterranean deployment and served as Communicator, Main Propulsion Assistant and as Weapons Officer during JOHN MARSHALL's conversion to a swimmer delivery platform.

Following this tour, he reported to the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, and earned Masters Degrees in Engineering Acoustics and Systems Technology. Upon graduation with distinction in March 1987, he received the Chief of Naval Operations Award in Anti-Submarine Warfare.

After the Submarine Officer's Advanced Course, he reported as Combat Systems Officer on USS PITTSBURGH (SSN 720), where he completed two deployments to the Northern Atlantic and one to the Mediterranean. In March 1990, he was assigned to the Precommissioning Unit WEST VIRGINIA (SSBN 736) as Gold Crew Navigation/Operations Officer and served on board through commissioning and the Gold Crew's first patrol.

He relieved as Executive Officer of USS GATO (SSN 615) in April 1992 and completed two Southern Atlantic Deployments. After this tour, he attended the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, and upon graduation in June 1995, reported to the Office of the Secretary of Defense as Executive Assistant for Strategic Targeting Policy.

Commander Stevens' personal decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Commendation Medal (six awards), the Navy Achievement Medal (four awards) and several unit and service awards.

Commander Stevens is married to the former Ann Davidson of Baldwin, New York. They reside in Bremerton, Washington, with their two sons, Christopher and Matthew and their daughter Kerry-Ann.

**USS BILLFISH (SSN 676)**  
**DECOMMISSIONING CREW**  
**WARDROOM**

**CDR James G. Stevens**  
*Commanding Officer*

**LCDR John A. Camara**  
*Executive Officer*

**LTJG Kenneth L. Flaherty**  
*Supply Officer*

**LT Ryan D. Peugh**  
*Navigator*

**LT Erik C. Anderson**  
*Combat Systems Officer*

**LTJG Andrew O. Nold**  
*Reactor Controls Assistant*

**LT Alessandro V. Alveario**  
*Damage Control Assistant*

**LTJG Brian C. Taddiken**  
*Chemistry/Radiological  
Controls Assistant*

**LTJG T.J. Fitzgerald**  
*Main Propulsion Assistant*

**LCDR Dennis R. Boyer**  
*Engineer Officer*

**LTJG Terrence M. Nawara**  
*Electrical Assistant*



**USS BILLFISH (SSN 676)  
DECOMMISSIONING CREW  
CHIEF'S QUARTERS**

**MMCM(SS) Richard J. Butler**  
*Chief of the Boat*

**MMCS(SS) Michael L. Parish**  
*3-M Coordinator*

**YNC(SS) Roy Ivory, Jr.**  
*Personnel Officer*

**MMCS(SS) Jeffrey W. Smith**  
*Torpedo Division*

**ETC(SS) Jimmy Bullock**  
*Navigation/Operations*  
*Department Enlisted Advisor*

**ETC(SS) Daniel E. Lilley**  
*Reactor Controls Division*

**MMC(SS/DV) Vincent E. Kubicsko**  
*Machinery Division*

**MMC(SS) William J. Syring**  
*Engineering Department*  
*Enlisted Advisor*

**ETC(SS) James J. Szabo**  
*Assistant Navigator*

**FTC(SS) Ricky Williams**  
*Fire Control Division*

**SKC(SS) Fernando Berrios-cintron**  
*Supply Department*

**EMC(SS) Duane L. Phillips**  
*Electrical Division*



# **USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) DECOMMISSIONING CREW**

## **YEOMAN DIVISION**

YN1(SS) Timothy M. Eaton  
YNSA(SS) Randy Murray, Jr.

## **SONAR DIVISION**

STS1(SS) Michael K. Kelly  
STS2(SS) Jay D. Gordon  
STS3(SS) Warren M. Swaar  
STS3(SS) Dennis M. Harrahill  
STS3(SS) Christopher S. Solomon  
STS3(SS) William P. Delorey  
STS3(SS) Brian L. Erwin  
STS3(SS) Eric W. Neal

## **FIRE CONTROL DIVISION**

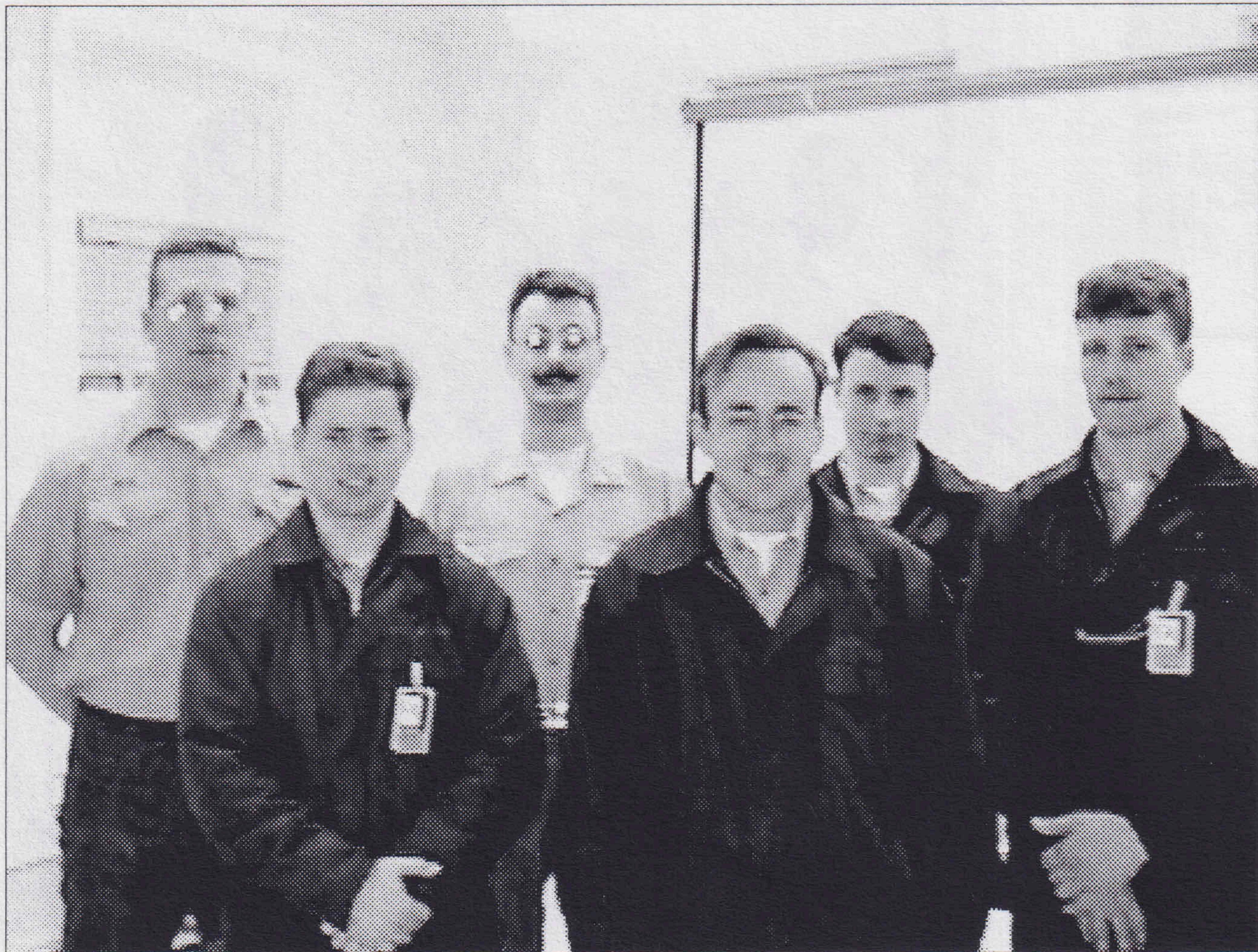
FT2(SS) Eric W. Burt  
FT3(SS) Gregory B. Moore

## **TORPEDO DIVISION**

MM1(SS) Anthony L. Wall  
MM3(SS) Marcos Alvarado  
MM3(SS) Stanley M. Hawbaker

## **DECK DIVISION**

STS1(SS) James J. Kiernan  
STS3(SS) Fernando U. Guerrero  
SN(SU) Clark R. Huffman



# **USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) DECOMMISSIONING CREW**

## **NAVIGATION DIVISION**

ET2(SS) William T. Young  
ET2(SS) Dwaine M. Grant  
ET2(SS) Christopher M. Miglio  
ET3(SS) Dennis E. Arnett  
ET3(SS) Jeffrey W. Bromfield  
ET3(SS) Daniel J. Rosenberger

## **MESS MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST DIVISION**

MS2(SS) John L. Kirk  
MS3(SS) Ronald J. Mills  
MS3(SS) Joseph S. Mirabile  
MSSN(SS) Harrun W. Majeed  
SA(SS) Stewart T. Spencer, IV

## **COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION**

ET2(SS) Brandon D. Kibbey  
ET2(SS) Charles V. Lynn, Jr.  
ET3(SS) Robert M. Inman

## **STOREKEEPER DIVISION**

SK2(SS) Sheldon R. Raph  
SK3(SS) Charles P. Barrett  
SK3(SS) Robert P. Berg Jr.



# **USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) DECOMMISSIONING CREW**

## **AUXILIARY DIVISION**

MM1(SS) Michael D. Gesford  
MM1(SS) Clinton V. Bigelow  
MM2(SS) Darrin A. Parker  
MM3(SS) Marco A. Hinojosa  
MMFN(SS) Elbert L. Goodson, Jr.  
MM3(SS) Steven L. Hidalgo  
MM3(SS) Stephen M. Diamond  
MMFN(SS) Jonathan W. Hanus  
MMFN(SS) Jeffrey M. Eberle  
MMFN(SS) Roger L. Stevenson

## **ELECTRICAL DIVISION**

EM1(SS) Christopher D. Hurst  
EM1(SS) Jeffery D. McLain  
EM2(SS) Brent D. Arntzen  
EM2(SS) John S. Dunn  
EM2(SS) Boris E. Bent  
EM2(SS/DV) Steven M. Hubbs  
EM2(SS) David W. Thomas  
EM3(SS) Nicholas A. Miller  
EM3(SS) James M. Spall  
EM3(SS) Christopher N. Mistal  
EM3(SS) William C. Conrad



# **USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) DECOMMISSIONING CREW**

## **REACTOR CONTROLS DIVISION**

ET1(SS) William a. Schmelze  
ET1(SS) Gregory A. Stanek  
ET2(SS) Troy M. Cawley  
ET2(SS) Robert W. Lachapelle  
ET2(SS) Judd T. Brown  
ET3(SS) Gerald T. Murchison  
ET2(SS) Brian M. Calame

## **REACTOR LABORATORY DIVISION**

MM1(SS) Randall W. Beck  
MM2(SS) James A. Schoneman  
MM2(SS) Joseph C. Squier  
MM2(SS) Tommie W. Choate

## **MACHINERY DIVISION**

MM1(SS) Randall D. Farnum II  
MM1(SS) John L. Grace  
MM2(SS) James T. Cookson  
MM2(SS) Devin A. VanWinkle  
MM3(SS) Josiah A. Moyer  
MM3(SS) Chad A. Greenlee  
MM3(SS) Jason W. Gillett  
MM3(SU) Benjamin C. Feider  
MM3(SU) Samuel L. Sawyer  
MM3(SU) Kevin M. Madden  
MM3(SU) Matthew D. Parker





*Commissioned*  
12 March 1971

*Decommissioned*  
1 July 1999

## THE COMMISSIONING PENNANT

At the moment the commissioning pennant is flown, a ship becomes the responsibility of the Commanding Officer, who together with the ship's officers and crew, has the duty of making her ready for any service required by our nation, at peace or in war.

The commissioning pennant has for centuries been the symbol of a man-of-war. It is believed to date from the 17th century, when the Dutch were at war with the English. Dutch Admiral Maarten Harpertszoon Tromp hoisted a broom at his masthead to symbolize his intention to sweep the English from the sea. This gesture was answered by British Admiral William Blake, who hoisted a horsewhip indicating his intention to chastise the Dutch. The victorious English thus set the precedent for a long, narrow commissioning pennant, symbolizing the original horsewhip, to be the distinctive mark of a man-of-war. This tradition of so designating ships of war has been adopted by all nations.

The modern United States Navy commissioning pennant is blue at the hoist with a horizontal red and white stripe at the fly and varies in length with the size of the ship. At one time, there were thirteen white stars in the blue field representing the original states, but in 1933, seven white stars became the standard. It is naval custom that when the commissioning pennant is hauled down for the last time it is presented to the Commanding Officer.

