

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676)



DEPARTURE CEREMONY

12 AUGUST 1998

NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE

NEW LONDON

GROTON, CONNECTICUT

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	Jun 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 – Present



THE CEREMONY

This ceremony is a formal military function, similar in many respects to the commissioning ceremony. Thus, current and former crew members and all who played a significant role in the life of the ship can be afforded the opportunity to participate in the final official ceremony, which recognizes their contribution and their ship's service in the defense of our nation, while the ship is still in an operational status. It must be stressed that this ceremony is not a decommissioning ceremony. Rather, it is purely ceremonial in nature and does not in any way change the ship's status as a commissioned vessel.

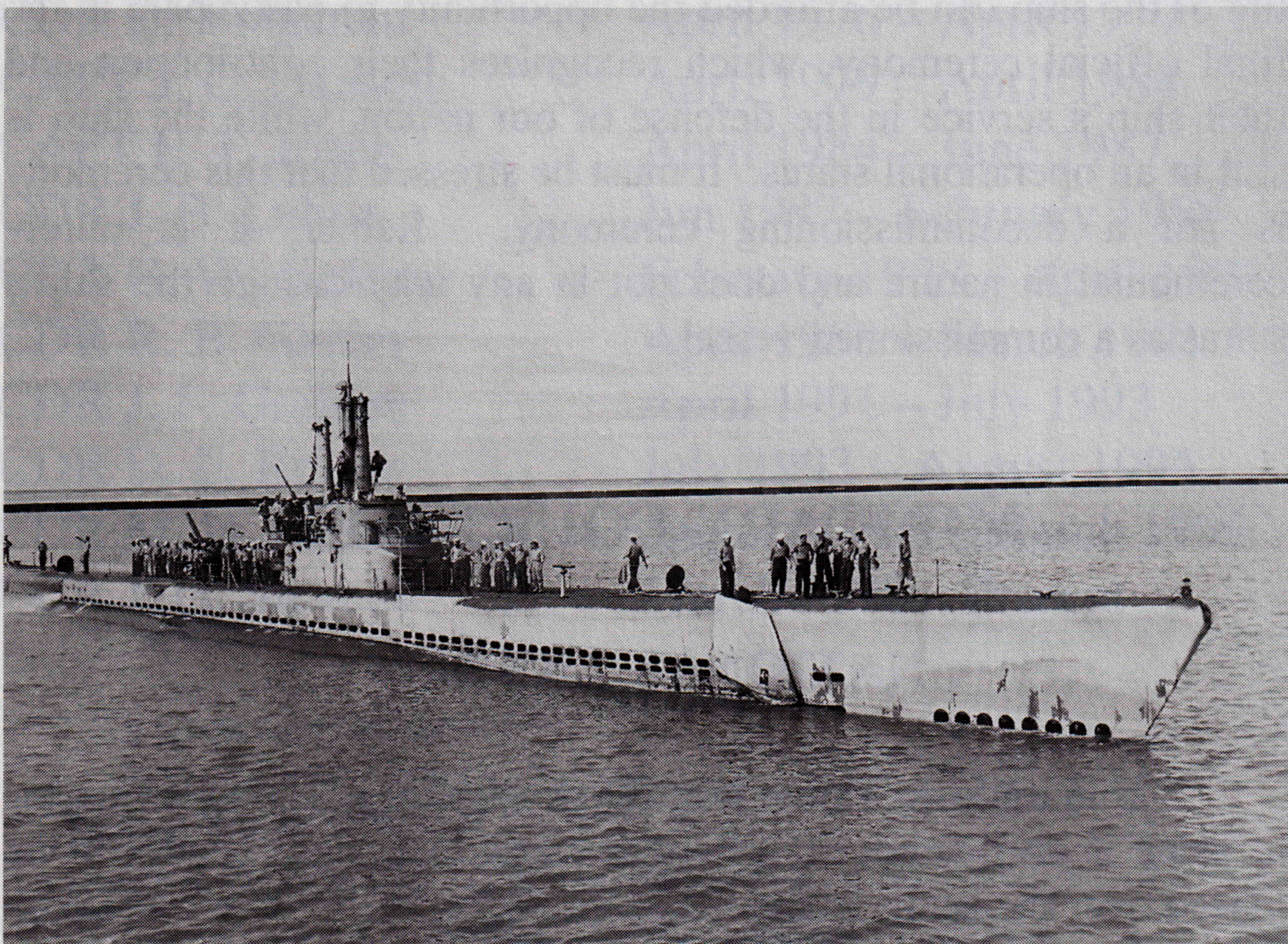
MILITARY COURTESIES

NATIONAL ANTHEM

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

ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE OF OFFICIAL PARTY

Participants (those on the platform or on the quarterdeck) salute until end of pipe flourishes or music. Attendees in uniform remain at attention and do not salute. During the gun salute, attendees in uniform stand at attention and salute from the first gun to the last.



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-five years ago today 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 1 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.



**PHILIP ARTHUR BESHANY
VICE ADMIRAL
UNITED STATES NAVY (RETIRED)**

Vice Admiral Beshany, a native of Jamaica, Long Island, New York, is a 1938 graduate of the United States Naval Academy. While at the Academy, he was president of the Foreign Language Club, served as Battalion Sub-Commander, and was active in boxing, soccer and track.

Following commissioning, Admiral Beshany joined the cruiser USS PHILADELPHIA, where he served for two years. He then reported to the Submarine Base, New London for submarine instruction. In December 1940 he was assigned to the S 14 and made several Atlantic Ocean patrols during World War II.

From November 1942 to July 1944, he served as Engineer Officer and Executive Officer in USS SCAMP, participating in seven Pacific war patrols. He was awarded the Silver Star Medal for conspicuous gallantry during SCAMP's first three war patrols and a Gold Star in lieu of a second Silver Star for the fourth war patrol. He was also awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" for heroic achievement during SCAMP's seventh war patrol during which he succeeded in stopping the dive of the SCAMP at 330 feet, and then prevented her from broaching at 52 feet, after an enemy plane bombed and damaged her severely.

Returning to the United States in July 1944, he reported to the USS QUILLBACK (SS 424) to assist in her fitting out at the Portsmouth Navy Yard. Following the ship's commissioning in January 1945, he remained as Executive Officer during QUILLBACK's first war patrol, participating in the assault and occupation of Okinawa Gunto.

As a Prospective Commanding Officer in Guam on 5 August 1945, he flew in the air rescue B29 as the submarine liaison officer for the diversionary raid for the Hiroshima A-bomb attack. He participated in the surrender ceremonies in Tokyo Bay and was the prize crew commander of the Japanese submarine I 365.

In October 1945, he assumed command of the USS BILLFISH (SS 286), commanding her until June 1946. Following Post-Graduate School in Annapolis, he also commanded USS BURRFISH (SSR 312) and USS AMBERJACK (SS 522).

In August 1951, Admiral Beshany returned to the Submarine Base, New London where he served as Engineer and Repair Officer, head of the Prospective Submarine Commanding Officer school and as Commander Submarine Division 101.

Following graduation from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, he commanded USS SALAMONIE (AO 26) and in September 1961 assumed command of Submarine Squadron FOUR in Charleston, South Carolina. Admiral Beshany also later commanded Submarine Squadron SIXTEEN in Rota, Spain.

In May 1964, Admiral Beshany was selected to Flag rank and was assigned as the Assistant Chief of Staff for Logistics on the staff of the Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, Southern Europe. In December 1966, he became Director of the Submarine Warfare Division in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and was later assigned additional duties as Nuclear Powered Submarine Program Coordinator.

In May 1969, Admiral Beshany assumed command of Amphibious Group IV and later served as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Fleet Operations and Readiness in the Navy Department.

Following the reorganization of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in 1971, Admiral Beshany received his third star and became the first Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Submarine Warfare.

Admiral Beshany completed his distinguished career in 1974 following duty as Commander, United States Taiwan Defense Command.

In addition to his wartime awards of two Silver Star Medals and the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V", Admiral Beshany was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit Medal with two Gold Stars, the American Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with Stars, World War II Victory Medal, Navy Occupation Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star, Expert Pistol Medal and the Submarine Combat Patrol Insignia with seven stars.

Admiral Beshany is married to the former Natalie R. Bliss of Scranton, Pennsylvania. They have two children, Natalie Ann Braniff and CAPT (sel) Philip Bliss Beshany, MC, USN.

Admiral and Mrs. Beshany were present at the keel laying of USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) and Mrs. Beshany welded her nickname "Gigi" into the ship's keel.

THE SPONSOR



The ship's sponsor is Mrs. Francis Howell Wheeler, wife of the late Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earl G. Wheeler. She is a native of Brooklyn, New York and Greenwich, Connecticut. She married Earl G. Wheeler upon his graduation from West Point and they spent most of their life together "soldiering".

Mrs. Wheeler has been an active supporter of BILLFISH on a continuing basis, never missing a change of command, ship's anniversary or other major function. She currently resides in Martinsburg, West Virginia.



RICHARD M. HUGHES
CAPTAIN
UNITED STATES NAVY (RETIRED)

Captain Richard M. Hughes is the son of Mr. And Mrs. A. L. Hughes of Quaker City, Ohio. He enlisted in the Navy in June 1949 following graduation from Quaker City High School. As an enlisted man he served as an Electronics Technician on the USS CABOT (CVL 28)

In July 1951 he received a Secretary of the Navy appointment to the United States Naval Academy and graduated from there with distinction in 1955. Upon graduation he was ordered to the USS ERBEN (DD 631) where he became the Engineer Officer. He attended Submarine School in 1957 and subsequently served on the USS RAZORBACK (SS-394) homeported in San Diego, California.

In April 1959 Captain Hughes was enrolled in the nuclear power training program. He then served as part of the commissioning crew of the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (SSBN 600) before reporting as Engineer Officer of the USS JOHN ADAMS (SSBN 620).

From 1965 to 1967 Captain Hughes was assigned to the New London area as Director of the Executive Division at Submarine School. He then went to the USS TINOSA (SSN 606) for duty as Executive Officer.

In April 1970, Captain Hughes reported to the precommissioning unit BILLFISH (SSN 676) at Electric Boat Division, Groton, Connecticut as the Prospective Commanding Officer. Following commissioning in 1971, he continued as Commanding Officer for two years of operations as a unit of Submarine Development Group TWO.

In July 1973, Captain Hughes became Commanding Officer of the U.S. Naval Nuclear Power Training Unit, Idaho Falls, Idaho. He assumed command of the USS FULTON (AS 11) on completion of the ship's overhaul in Charleston, South Carolina in October 1976 and was relieved in July 1978. Captain Hughes then assumed command as Commander Submarine Refit and Training Group, La Maddalena, Italy in August 1978. Following this assignment, he was Deputy Director of the Attack Submarine Division on the Staff of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Submarine Warfare in Washington, DC.

Captain Hughes is married to the former Mary Joyce Douglas of New York City, New York. They have four children: Douglas, Jeffrey, Susan and Gail.



JAMES G. STEVENS
COMMANDER
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 Gales Ferry, Connecticut, with their two sons, Christopher and Matthew. They are adopting a baby girl from China.



DOUGLAS VOLGENAU
REAR ADMIRAL
UNITED STATES NAVY (RETIRED)

RADM Douglas Volgenau, a native of Clarence, New York, graduated from the United States Naval Academy with the class of 1959.

After a junior officer tour on the USS *MITSCHER* (DL 2), the balance of his career was in submarine related duties. Submarine tours included USS *SEAWOLF* (SSN 575), USS *FRANCIS SCOTT KEY* (SSBN 657), USS *SKATE* (SSN 578) and command of USS *BILLFISH* (SSN 676) from 1976 to 1979. RADM Volgenau commanded Submarine Squadron TEN from 1983 to 1985. During that tour, USS *BILLFISH* was attached to Squadron TEN.

While ashore, RADM Volgenau graduated from the Naval Post Graduate School at Monterey, California with a Master of Science in Physical Oceanography; commanded the Naval Nuclear Power School at Mare Island, California; was Deputy Commander of Submarine Development Squadron TWELVE; served as the Senior Member of the Nuclear Propulsion Examining Board on the Staff of the Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet; and commanded the Naval Underwater Systems Center, a key government research and development laboratory.

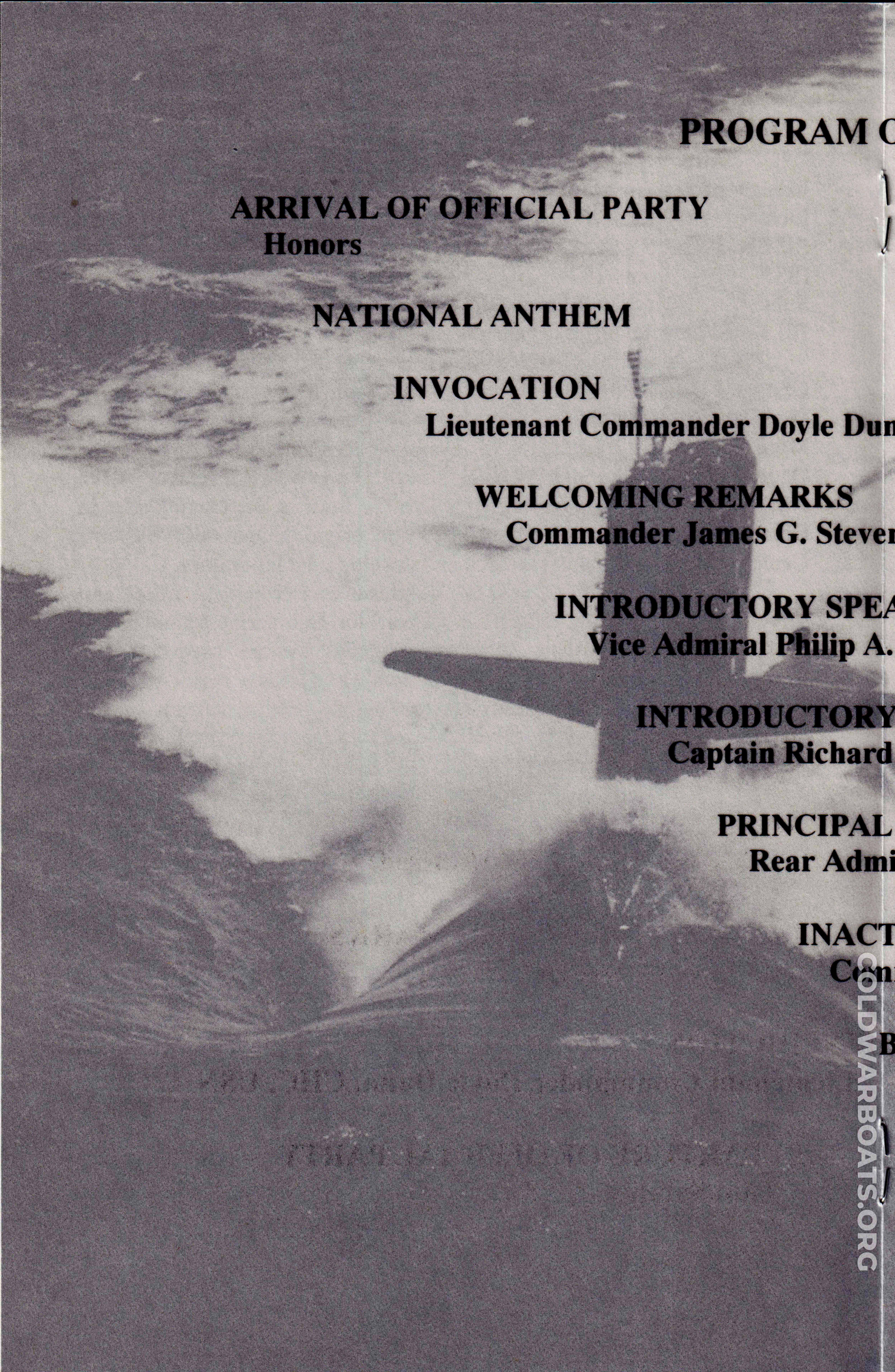
As a Flag Officer, RADM Volgenau established the office and served as the Program Executive Officer for Submarine Combat and Weapons Systems. This submarine combat system hardware and software acquisition organization was comprised of six major program offices and encompassed contracts totaling more than eleven billion dollars. The organization received two awards from the Secretary of the Navy and a competitive contracting award.

RADM Volgenau's personal decorations include the Legion of Merit (four awards), the Meritorious Service Medal (two awards), the Navy Commendation Medal, the Navy Achievement Medal, and various unit and campaign awards.

Upon completing military service in October 1991, RADM Volgenau established a consulting company. The firm provides technical consulting services in nuclear and environmental safety, energy, defense systems engineering and technology, and corporate management. Clients include defense companies, Department of Energy companies, government agencies and private institutions. He has worked extensively with the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board as an outside expert, assisting in the oversight of Department of Energy weapons research and manufacturing facilities.

RADM Volgenau is married to the former Susan Steadman Graham of Montclair, New Jersey. They have three children, two sons-in-law, a daughter-in-law and eight super grandchildren.





PROGRAM C

ARRIVAL OF OFFICIAL PARTY
Honors

NATIONAL ANTHEM

INVOCATION

Lieutenant Commander Doyle Dun

WELCOMING REMARKS

Commander James G. Steven

INTRODUCTORY SPEA

Vice Admiral Philip A.

INTRODUCTORY

Captain Richard

PRINCIPAL

Rear Admi

INACT

Com

OF EVENTS

nn, CHC, USN

ns, USN

AKER

. Beshany, USN (Retired)

SPEAKER

M. Hughes, USN (Retired)

SPEAKER

iral Douglas Volgenau, USN (Retired)

TIVATION AND CLOSING REMARKS

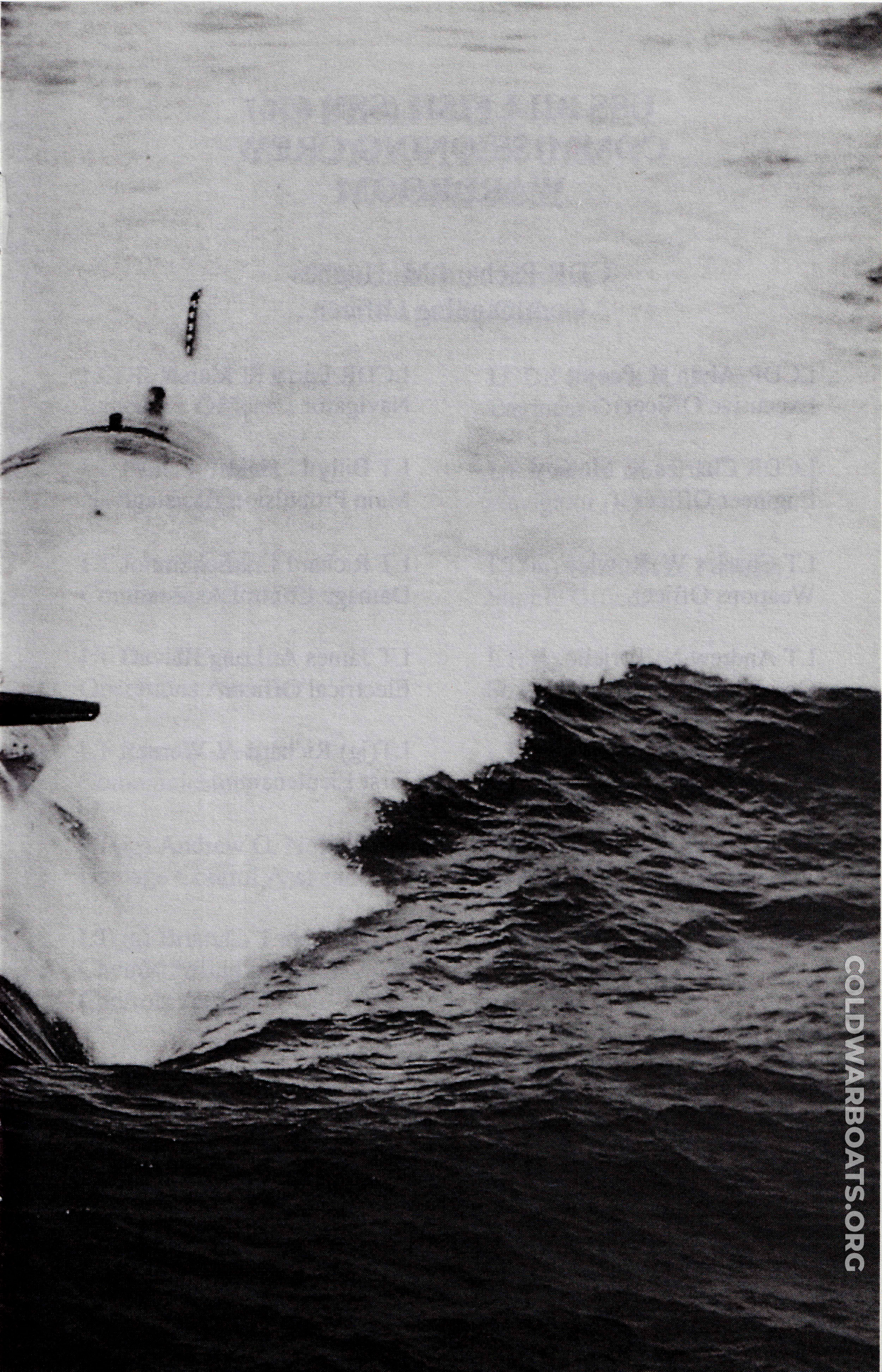
mander James G. Stevens, USN

BENEDICTION

Lieutenant Commander Doyle Dunn, CHC, USN

DEPARTURE OF OFFICIAL PARTY

Gun Salutes



USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) COMMISSIONING CREW WARDROOM

**CDR Richard M. Hughes
Commanding Officer**

**LCDR Alvin H. Paoule
Executive Officer**

**LCDR Larry R. Marsh
Navigator**

**LCDR Charles K. McKoy
Engineer Officer**

**LT Billy L. Heid
Main Propulsion Assistant**

**LT Charles W. Rowley
Weapons Officer**

**LT Richard L. Michaux
Damage Control Assistant**

**LT Andrew N. Toriello, Jr.
Operations Officer**

**LT James A. Long III
Electrical Officer**

**LT(jg) Roger C. Jarman
Communications Officer**

**LT(jg) Richard A. Werner
First Lieutenant**

**LT(jg) Daniel H. Diller
Supply Officer**

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) INACTIVATION CREW WARDROOM

**CDR James G. Stevens
Commanding Officer**

**LCDR Robert F. Brese
Executive Officer**

**LCDR Dennis R. Boyer
Engineer Officer**

**LT Paul A. Jensen
Navigator (D)**

**LT Lynn L. Boyer IV
Navigator (R)**

**LT John Spencer
Combat Systems Officer**

**LT(jg) Kenneth L. Flaherty
Supply Officer**

**LT David C. Legler
Operations Assistant**

**LT(jg) Erik C. Anderson
Sonar Officer**

**LT Ryan D. Peugh
Communicator**

**LT(jg) Alessandro V. Alveario
Main Propulsion Assistant**

**LT(jg) Andrew O. Nold
Damage Control Assistant**

**LT(jg) T. J. Fitzgerald
Reactor Controls Assistant**

**LT(jg) Brian C. Taddiken
Chemistry/Radiological
Controls Assistant**

**LT(jg) Terrence M. Nawara
Electrical Assistant**

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) COMMISSIONING CREW CHIEF'S QUARTERS

**FTCS(SS) James E. White
Chief of the Boat**

**STSCS(SS) Fred B. Fuller
Sonar Division**

**EMCS(SS) Henry L. Tardiff
Electrical Division**

**QMCS(SS) Clinton R. White
Assistant Navigator**

ETCS(SS) Wayne A. Russell, Jr.

MMC(SS) Walter H. Seifert

**RMC(SS) Theodore A. Vignaux
Radio Division**

ETC(SS) Harold E. Ruble, Jr.

**TMC(SS) Donald E. Tetschlag
Torpedo Division**

**ICC(SS) Barrett A. Metzler
Interior Communications Division**

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) INACTIVATION CREW CHIEF'S QUARTERS

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

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

**STSCS(SS) George A. Torkelson
Sonar Division**

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

**HMCS(SS) Timothy Peak
Corpsman**

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

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

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

**ETC(SS) Eric K. Cupp
Navigation/Operations
Department Enlisted Advisor**

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

**ETC(SS) Jimmy Bullock
Navigation Division**

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

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

**MSC(SS) Cameron Consalvo
Mess Management Specialist**

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

**MMC(SS) John S. Stapleton
Auxiliary Division**

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) INACTIVATION CREW

Yeoman Division

YN2(SS) Patrick M. Daly
YNSN(SU) Randy Murray, Jr.

Sonar Division

STS1(SS) Michael K. Kelly
STS1(SS) Kenneth A. McMahon
STS2(SS) James J. Kiernan
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
STSSN(SU) Fernando U. Guerrero
STSSN(SS) Christopher M. Knoll

Fire Control Division

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

Torpedo Division

MM1(SS) Michael D. Gesford
MM1(SS) Anthony L. Wall
MM2(SS) Chad E. Russell
MM3(SS) Brett R. Walker
MM3(SS) Marcos Alvarado
MM3(SS) Stanley M. Hawbaker

Deck Division

SN(SS) Robert P. Berg, Jr.
SN(SU) Antoine L. Manigan
FA(SU) Roy W. Kersh, Jr.
SA(SU) Waku M. Smith

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) INACTIVATION CREW

Navigation Division

ET2(SS) William T. Young
ET2(SS) Dwaine M. Grant
ET2(SS) Christopher M. Miglio
ET2(SS) Dennis E. Arnett
ET3(SS) Jeffrey W. Bromfield
ET3(SS) Daniel J. Rosenberger
ETSN(SU) Erik P. Friis
ETSN(SU) James R. Journey IV
ETSN(SU) Jacob R. Langer

Communications Division

ET1(SS) Richard S. Biggs
ET1(SS) John D. Markes
ET1(SS) Gregory G. Lindholm
ET2(SS) Robert L. Sumara
ET2(SS) Brandon D. Kibbey
ET3(SS) William P. Hallman, Jr.
ET3(SS) Charles V. Lynn, Jr.

Mess Management Specialist Division

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

Storekeeper Division

SK1(SS) Fernando Berrioscintron
SK3(SS) Charles P. Barrett

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) INACTIVATION CREW

Yeoman Division

YN2(SS) Patrick M. Daly
YNSA(SU) Randy Murray, Jr.

Auxiliary Division

MM1(SS) Clinton V. Bigelow
MM2(SS) Darrin A. Parker
MM2(SS) Frederick P. Olmstead
MM2(SS) Gary L. Dubose
MM3(SS) Marco A. Hinojosa
MM3(SS) Elbert L. Goodson, Jr.
MMFN(SS) Steven L. Hidalgo
MMFN(SS) Stephen M. Diamond
MMFN(SS) Jonathan W. Hanus
MMFA(SU) Jeffrey M. Eberle
MMFA(SU) Roger L. Stevenson

Electrical Division

EM1(SS) Daniel J. Rancour
EM2(SS) Brent D. Arntzen
EM2(SS) Jonathan E. Rasmussen
EM2(SS) Jhon R. Duncan
EM2(SS) Boris E. Bent
EM2(SS/DV) Steven M. Hubbs
EM2(SS) David W. Thomas
EM3(SS) Nicholas A. Miller
EM3(SU) James M. Spall
EM3(SS) Christopher N. Mistal
EM3(SU) William C. Conrad

USS BILLFISH (SSN 676) INACTIVATION CREW

Reactor Controls Division

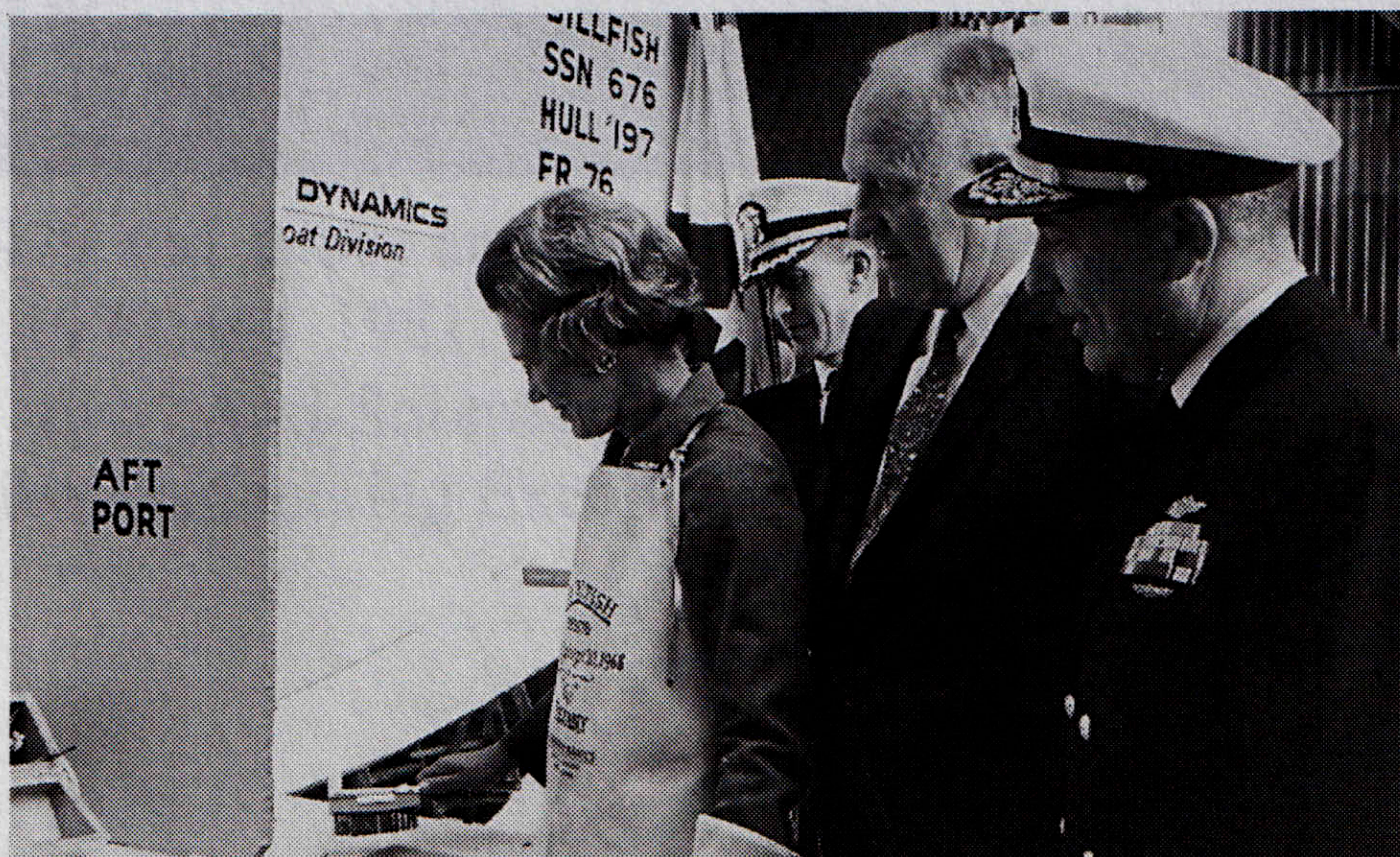
ET1(SS) Bradley D. Hammond
ET2(SS) Troy M. Cawley
ET2(SS) Robert W. Lachapelle
ET2(SS) Judd T. Brown
ET2(SS) James S. Parham
ET3(SU) Gerald T. Murchison
ET3(SU) Brian M. Calame

Reactor Laboratory Division

MM1(SS) Randall W. Beck
MM1(SS) Jeremy M. Bergstrom
MM2(SS) James A. Schoneman
MM2(SS) Michael J. Langelier
MM2(SS) Joseph C. Squier
MM2(SS) Tommie W. Choate

Machinery Division

MM1(SS) Randall D. Farnum II
MM1(SS) James C. Bowman
MM1(SS) Scott A. Rose
MM1(SS) John L. Grace
MM2(SS) Jacob M. Cook
MM2(SS/DV) Terrence P. Comeaux
MM2(SS) James T. Cookson
MM2(SS) Devin A. VanWinkle
MM3(SS) Josiah A. Moyer
MM3(SU) Chad A. Greenlee
MM3(SU) Jason W. Gillett





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 late Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 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.

BILLFISH is scheduled for under-ice operations prior to her decommissioning in 1999 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**

**DAMAGE CONTROL “DC”
1979**

**SUPPLY “E”
1986 1996**

**ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE “A”
1978 1979 1985**

**MEDICAL “M”
1985**

**DECK SEAMANSHIP “D”
1997**



Commissioned
12 March 1971

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 Harpertzoon 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.



