



1943



1972

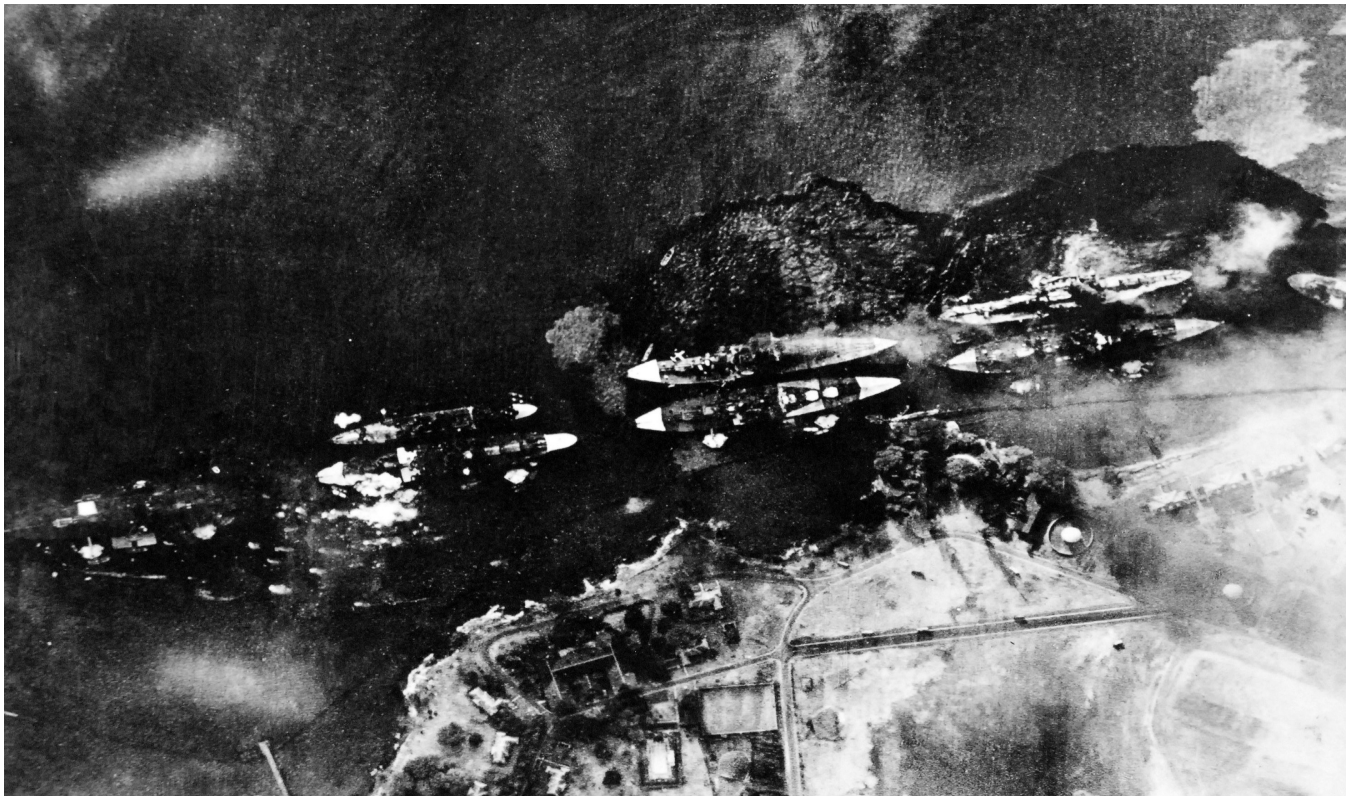


THE BANG GANG NEWS LETTER

Published to perpetuate the memory of USS BANG (SS-385) and her Crew

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THE DAY OF INFAMY DECEMBER 7TH 1941

THE PHOTO SHOWS THE FIRST BOMBS HITTING BATTLESHIP ROW

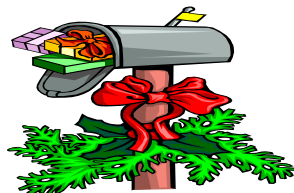
NEVADA
ARIZONA

TENNESSEE
WEST VIRGINIA

MARYLAND
OKLAHOMA



FPO



This column is dedicated to all the letters we receive from you. Any info about yourself or others you want to share with your shipmates will be published here. Think of this as a combination of the bulletin board in the Crew's Mess and the IMC.

Hello shipmates, friends and loyal readers!

Well, another year has come to the end, and with it another reunion is in the books. Our hosts Alan and Linda Thole put on a great get together in Little Rock Arkansas. It was a week of getting reacquainted with old shipmates, spouses, and significant others. It was a week of telling sea stories we all heard before and can't wait to hear again. The Gang had the good fortune of a week of great barbeque and I'm sure a great big helping of good old Country and Western entertainment. As an added treat, many took the time to venture aboard the USS RAZORBACK (SS394), a Balao Class submarine, just like the BANG, which I am sure brought back many fond memories, especially since going topside was not in freezing weather with a ten knot wind coming off the Thames river. The yard tug, USS HOGA (YT-146) was also moored there. The HOGA was instrumental in the comeback of Pearl Harbor after December 7th, something I'll go into later in the newsletter. So Stay tuned!

I was not able to attend as I had an appointment with agents at the Mystery Writers of America Florida Chapter during the same time. Unfortunately, I made plans, but Mother Nature laughed! Hurricane Milton came calling and the MWA convention was cancelled and rescheduled for next May. So I did not make the convention OR the reunion. This gave me the added incentive to make sure I attend the next one, hopefully in Northern Florida. Speaking of attending, here is the list of this year's attendees:

Robert Sawyer TM 58-61
Charles & Patricia Archer RM 62-65
Rocco & Nancy DeLeo TM 63-66
Jim & Yolanda Klein EN 64-66 and guests Gerald & Judith Holmberg
Harry & JoAnn Ross STS 64-67
Rob Bridle & Pauline Rondo and guests Frank & Claudia Steinmetz
Bill and Joan Fenton LT 67-71
Joan & Darlene Kraft RM 68-70
Len and Sharon Sciuto QM 69-71
Roland & Audry Daigle ET 66-67
Gabe & Pam Lewis FTGU 66-68
Gerald & Connie Simpson TM 66-68 and Guest Debbie Prouly
Denis O'Brien TM 67-68 & Guest Debbie Hansen
David Krieger LT 67-69
Ike Cohen & Michelle Ostapiej SK 70-70
Hal & Edith Wilkins ET 69-72
Paul Schramm & Rob Knolle ET 70-71
Luis Arellano & Wendi Kingsbauer ST 71-72
Mark & Anelisa Heiman EN 71-72
And of course our hosts Alan and Linda Thone IC 68-69

Hope to see you all and even more in 2025!

**USS BANG BUSINESS MEETING
3 OCTOBER 2024
LITTLE ROCK, AR**

President Bill Fenton called the meeting to order at 1000 hours and requested all present to stand and pledge allegiance to our flag.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

President: Bill Fenton

VP: Paul Schramm

Secretary: Alan Thole

Treasurer/Storekeeper: Ike Cohen

OLD BUSINESS:

Missing Klaxon and bell question was brought up. Bill Fenton will send a letter to all attendees of the 2023 reunion requesting any information on the missing items.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. A motion was brought forward for Alan Thole to be elected Secretary. The motion was approved and seconded by Gabe Lewis and John Kraft.
2. Election for all other officers was held and was unanimously voted to have the existing board remain. The next election will be held at the 2026 Reunion.
3. Tentatively the 2025 reunion will be held in Jacksonville or Kings Bay, FL. Len Sciuto and Rob Bridle are investigating the sites.
4. Bill Fenton announced anyone who signed up and paid to come to a reunion and had to cancel for a valid reason would be fully refunded.
5. Bill Fenton gave thanks to Linda and Alan Thole for organizing and hosting the Little Rock reunion. Linda and Alan want to thank Paul Schramm, Bill Fenton, Pam and Gabe Lewis Michelle Ostapie and Ike Cohen, and GangRob Bridle, and Eric Ericson for their help in more ways.
6. Phil Beals was praised and honored for his tireless work and dedication to the Bang Gang reunion planning. Phil is also remembered for starting the Bang Gang Newsletter and was a long time editor.
7. Motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Gabe Lewis approved the motion and was seconded by John Kraft.

**USS BANG BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 2, 2024
LITTLE ROCK, AR**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

BILL FENTO PAUL SCHRAMM IKE COHEN

ALAN THOLE LEN SCIUTO (GUEST)

ITEMS THAT WERE DISCUSSED

Purchasing postage stamps for less money than post office prices, has saved a lot of money. The newsletter mailing is still the biggest ticket item.

2024 is election year for all committee members. Election proceedings will be held at the business meeting Thursday morning October 3, 2024.

Len Sciuto and Rob Bridle have volunteered to check King's Bay and Jacksonville, Fl for the 2025 reunion.

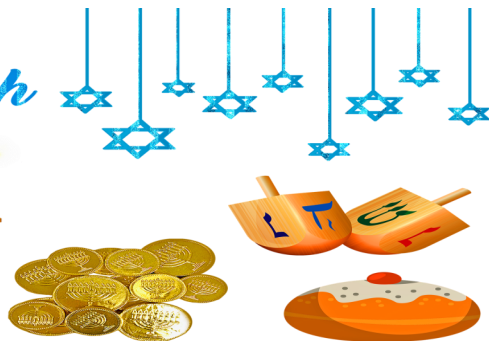
USS Bang memorabilia items to be donated was discussed. Possible locations would be St. Mary's Museum in GA and Submarine Museum in New London, CT.







Happy Hanukkah



REVENGE OF THE PEARL HARBOR BATTLEWAGONS

DECEMBER 8TH-1941

Dawn revealed the aftermath of the worst naval destruction in American history. Earlier in the day in Washington, D.C. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had requested and been granted a declaration of war against the Empire of Japan. The mightiest naval presence in the Pacific had been reduced to a landscape of smoldering wreckage. Billowing, diesel scented, clouds of smoke lay over the harbor now clogged with bodies still waiting to be recovered from the oil slick covered water around Ford Island. Hundreds of crew were still trapped inside the capsized *OKLAHOMA*, victims of a below decks inspection, in full dress, on a Sunday. All other battleships, the pride of the Pacific Fleet, had been sunk or badly damaged. The *NEVADA* had gotten underway, but had taken two torpedoes in her port hull and beached herself to prevent from sinking. Only the light cruiser *PHOENIX* was able to make her way to open sea, only to return when there was no enemy in sight. Immediately the base came back to life, struggling to clear the wreckage, and return Pearl to its former glory. Thirty thousand workers from the shipyards across the mainland were sent to Pearl to begin the herculean task of bringing the Pacific Fleet back to life. The *OKLAHOMA* was righted, the *NEVADA*, with the help of the yard tug *HOGA* was pulled free and returned to a drydock. Most of the battlewagons, after a rudimentary patch up were sent to the West Coast for more extensive repairs and refitting. The *Pennsylvania*, ironically still in the same drydock it had been in when the attack began, had suffered extensive bomb damage topside but her hull was unscathed and was the first to return to duty. The ancient battlewagons were immediately given a new life with upgraded navigation and fire control systems. The iconic but now useless “bird cage” masts were discarded and replaced with the more prosaic, but lethal, masts crammed with the latest long and short range radar. The 14” and 16” long guns were rebored and rifled, and now sat alongside rows of twin turreted 5” guns. Three years later the battleships were back. Time and naval design had taken its toll however. These once proud capital ships of the line were slow and were no match for the faster and more powerful *NORTH CAROLINA* and *IOWA* class battleships. They were destined to spend their days as shore bombardment platforms, and in a final insult were under the command of General Douglas McArthur. An Army man.

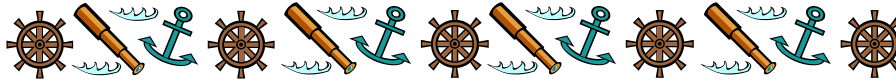
That would end in one climatic, the last of its kind, naval engagement.

SURIGAO STRAIT, MINDANAO OCTOBER 24, 1944

For weeks, Naval Intelligence at Pacific Fleet Headquarters at Pearl Harbor had suspected that the Japanese Navy was planning an offensive to counter the invasion of the Philippines. They were right, they learned that a three prong attack named SHO-1, designed to divide the US Navy into three areas, thereby creating a more even battleground with the numerically and vastly more powerful Americans. The Southern prong was lead by Admiral Nishimura, a capable leader, but saddened by the loss of his only son, a pilot in 1942. Nishimura knew his mission was suicide, but if he could stanch the advance of the American Forces, then his death and duty to the Emperor would be worth it. His two battleships were the *FUSO* and *YAMASHIRO*, ships that were even older than the one's he was about to face. The seventh fleet commander, RADM Jesse Oldendorf had, in addition to his six battleships, commanded by RADM George Weyler, 39 nine PT boats, 8 cruisers, and 22 destroyers. These supporting ships would harass the Japanese line and report back on their progress, and also giving the US Navy line the holy grail of naval warfare...crossing the T. Crossing the T was a maneuver where one fleet could fire all its broadsides at the head ship of the enemy. It was used effectively by the Japanese in the Battle of Tsushima. As the early morning grew darker, the skirmishes between Oldendorf's advance force were visible in the distance, and RAdm George Weyler, the battleship Commander ordered his ships to open fire when the enemy was within 14 1/2 miles. The *WEST VIRGINIA*, with her 16" guns opened fire at 0353, sending the first broadside against an enemy in its long history. Two minutes later the rest of the line opened up, again for the first time. The effect was pure holocaust. One gunnery officer recalled, "now I know what Hell looks like." In minutes, the entire Japanese force was in flames, the cruisers sent over 3,000 shells into the Japanese line in just 18 minutes. They redeemed the cruisers lost at Savo Island. At 0419, the *YAMASHIRO* sank, taking Adm. Nishimura and 1400 of her crew with her. Only one ship survived to tell the tale. Oldendorf ordered his destroyers to pick up survivors, and if they didn't want to live, then his words, "let 'em drown." So ended the battle of Surigao Strait, the battle the battlewagons of the early 20th century were designed and built to fight. Built and commissioned in the early 20th century, and were passed over with the advent of the fast carrier and battleship force. These once prides of the Navy, these veterans of the "Severn River Gun Club" as Annapolis called them, were finally able to perform the duty they were designed and built for. The battle of Surigao Strait was the last battleship on battleship engagement in history.



LOST AND FOUND



This page is dedicated to informing you of any additions, deletions, or corrections to our active roster.
It has been brought to our attention that the following shipmates have passed away and will be placed on Eternal Patrol.

CARL F WHITE TM 56-60 OBIL J WEBB RM 46 GENE LOCKWOOD EN 67-72

THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE HAVE GENEROUSLY DONATED TO THE BANG SLUSH FUND

FRANK STEINMETZ	ROCCO & NANCY DeLEO	THOMAS SCHAEFER
LENNY SCIUTO	RALPH GATES	JIM & HARRIET SCHULTZ
JOHN KRAFT	ROB BRIDLE	
YOLANDA KLEIN	IKE COHEN	

BARBARA PANKEY IN MEMORY OF RUSSELL PANKEY
DENIS O'BRIEN IN MEMORY OF MAUREEN O'BRIEN



THE FOLLOWING READER HAS CHANGED HER ADDRESS **NEW ADDRESS**

BETTY MANNING, 2031 MERIDIEN SPRINGS LANE, GREENFIELD, IN 46140-7280

EDITOR'S NOTE: IN THE LAST NEWSLETTER MARVIN CHRISTENSEN'S EMAIL WAS WRONG
THIS IS THE CORRECT EMAIL:
Chris181.mc@gmail.com

The editor apologizes and now has been assigned to permanent mess cook duty

ETERNAL PATROL



Carl E White– WWII veteran shipmate “Ed” White deployed on Eternal Patrol on 29 October 2024. Ed served on the BANG 56-60 as a torpedoman. He spent 20 years in the Navy, and after retiring returned to Connecticut to raise his family which included his wife of 52 years, his son Jack White, and many, many grandchildren and great grandchildren. He was a diehard Red Sox fan always watching them on TV waiting for that long awaited World Series win. He attended countless baseball game swatching his son and grandchildren play the game he loved. He spent many hours in his workshop, mowing the grass with his John Deere tractor, Ed lived simply, a tribute to his long years. Ed was awarded many medals, including the World War II Victory Medal.



Obil (Obie) Webb–Shipmate Obie singled his lines and shoved off on Eternal Patrol on 16 August, 2024. He attended Guntown High School in Mississippi and graduated in 1943. He volunteered for the Navy on his 18th birthday and chose the Submarine Service. He qualified on the USS KINGFISH SS-234, and served on the BANG in 1946. He retired from the Navy in 1969 as a Lieutenant, and upon retirement received a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics. He taught math in several school systems. Obie loved working with his hands. His hobbies were construction and gardening. He was an avid reader and crossword wizard. He was a member of the Redfish Base of the USSVI.

Gene Lockwood–Our shipmate Gene Lockwood reported for eternal Patrol on 29 November 2024. Gene was an engineman aboard the Bang and served on her from 67-71. Gene attended many reunions and was always ready with a quick laugh and a good joke. My personal recollection of Gene was as a member of the “three musketeers”. I call them that as they were Gene, Woody Herward, and Billy “bang” Cromie. I was the ultimate “Dinky” and had absolutely no knowledge of anything mechanical. They took me under their wings and pulled me through qualification. Gene gave me the confidence to struggle through, saying “you don’t have to build the boat, just know how it works!” After being delinquent for too many weeks to admit, I qualified in three. The truest definition of shipmates.



THE LUCKY BAG

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT
WAS SAFE TO GO TOPSIDE !



Hello shipmates, and faithful readers,

The end of another issue! I'd like to do some "housekeeping" items before we close another chapter in the Bang Gang saga.

1. First of all a great big thank you for Alan and Linda Thole's great work in putting on this year's reunion. As one who knows, it is not an easy job, and there are many road blocks along the way. Two of the most "prickly" are getting a hotel near the action and one who will furnish a Hospitality room. Also, as you saw in the masthead, (and I know you all read the masthead), you saw Alan as the new Bang gang Secretary. A better choice could not be made. I for one wish Alan nothing but success in his new (one time a year) endeavor, as I know all you do.
2. We have an urgent message from Ike Cohen the duty Treasurer/Storekeeper. Even though we had a great turnout this quarter for slush fund donations, we need even more. The small stores supply is running low and like all things these days, prices are not getting cheaper. Covers being the greatest increase in price, along with the other large expenditure, the newsletter. Postage keeps going up, and the cost of printing the hard copy is always expensive. I have been trying to keep the pages at a minimum, with larger ones during the holiday and reunion seasons. Michelle, my contact at Staples is always hunting for coupons, and for some corporate mumbo jumbo, gets me next day service without the upcharge. However with all these machinations, we are in need of some hefty cash inflow, so if you can help, I know Ike will be in your debt.
3. Speaking of expense, I have been getting some newsletters returned with the P.O designation, "Unable to Forward." This usually means one of two things, A. The recipient has moved and not informed me of the new address, or B. The recipient is no longer with us, and we have not been notified. I have two of these from my last mailing. Each newsletter costs from 5 to 6 dollars each, and this is money we could be saving. So, I'm asking you again, please keep your address current so you won't miss an issue, and we can escape deficit spending.
4. I hope all enjoyed the reunion pictures. They were taken by our President bill Fenton. There are more, but in the interest of space, I included just a few, the rest will be in the winter/spring issue. A great big thanks to our President.
5. The reunion turnout was great, and I was surprised to see that my WEPS DIV head, Mr. Krieger attended, and I wasn't there to say hi. I always like to see the wardroom in attendance, and hope to see more brass in upcoming get togethers. Mr. Smeage, you're next!
6. Finally on a sad note, Catherine Gibson, the wife of last COB of the BANG, Leo Gibson passed away recently. Like my mother, she was born in Scotland and she and COB Gibson shared 64 years of wedded bliss. Catherine filmed the last voyage of the USS BANG as a US Navy commissioned ship of the line as it left New London under the command of Captain Harriss. It is quite moving and if you haven't seen it, you can catch it on the web site. Our condolences to COB Gibson and may Catherine rest in peace.

Well, that's it for this issue, see you next quarter, with a new look! Take care all, and straight board to all!

Eric

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FIRST – CLASS MAIL
FORWARDING SERVICE
REQUESTED



PRAISE OUR MILITARY! - AND PRAY FOR THEM TOO.

