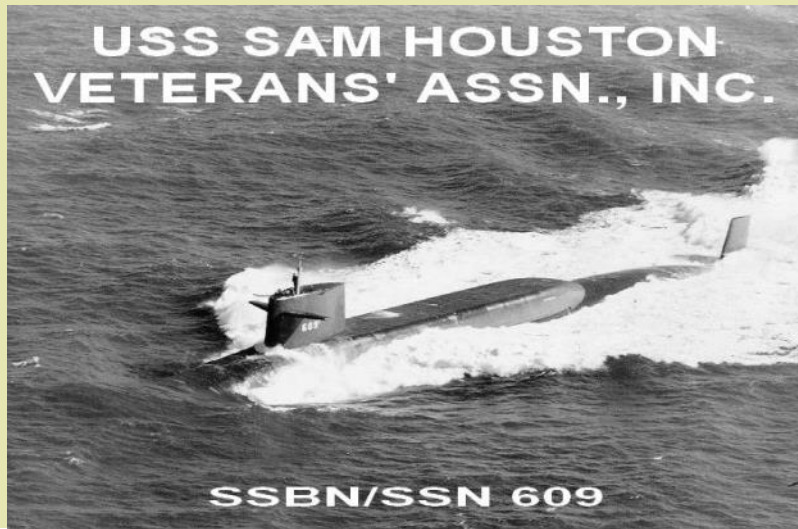


# USS SAM HOUSTON VETERANS' ASSN., INC.



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**1<sup>st</sup> Edition 2021**



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Web Site: [www.USSSamHouston.org](http://www.USSSamHouston.org)



# The Raven

An Official Publication of the USS Sam Houston Veterans' Assn.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

### Shipmates & Associate Members:

The COVID Crisis has allowed me to devote more time to the administration of the SHVA. Issuing another edition of our newsletter on the heels of the previous issue is unprecedented. The primary reason for the haste of issuing this newsletter is the many responses to a statement in the previous edition that I made which proved to be incorrect. I mentioned that I had believed that the only mid-patrol, port of call *anywhere* by *any* SSBN was **USS Sam Houston's** visit at Izmir, Turkey. I was immediately bombarded with numerous e-mails about the boat's repeated ports of call at Chinhae, South Korea. I was overrun with those e-mails which forced me not only to make a quick, consolidated response but to organize what my response would be while the information is fresh in my mind. This information will dominate this edition of the newsletter. For simplicity, I chose to present the Chinhae-related information that I received in the chronological order that I received it. Much of the information that I received was related to actual dates of ports of call; some of which is debated among the respondents through circulated e-mail chains. And much of that information was not verifiable. Three members located a list of visits by all SSBNs at Chinhae which was helpful, but the content of that list was challenged! I am excluding information related solely to "believed to be" dates because the SHVA is not attempting to provide an accurate history but a history of the events that happened. I am concentrating on other related information submitted—information that provides personal experiences and recollections of events. I am also including pictures that members submitted related to those events.

On another note, our reunion is scheduled for 23-25 Sep 2021 in Omaha, Neb. I hope that you can attend. An article in this newsletter contains information about this reunion possibly being rescheduled for 2022 if COVID or other disease-related restrictions might be effective during the reunion.

**Howard Dobson [ETR2(SS), Gold, 1969-1972]**  
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## REUNION 2021 UPDATE

Our 2021 reunion in Omaha, Neb. from 23-25 Sep 2021 is planned to occur based on an assumption that COVID-related restrictions will be completely lifted by then. If I cannot determine with a high degree of confidence by 01 Jun 2021 that those restrictions or any such restrictions will not exist during our reunion, I will reschedule that reunion for 2022.

We cannot have an enjoyable reunion with mask-wearing and/or social-distancing requirements. Moreover, such requirements in any degree can create a host of issues related to planned reunion events. Such issues can have adverse financial effects on the reunion; e.g., the need to have 2 coaches for transportation. I will only be charging reunion registrants for 1 coach. (If registrations might require a need for 2 coaches, I'll revise the cost, if necessary, and inform those who will have already registered.)

I intend to distribute the 2021 Reunion-Information Packet (RIP) by mid-March 2021, but I will be requesting that no one register for the reunion until mid-June 2021. Those who desire to attend may reserve a guest room with the hotel after receiving the RIP. Should the reunion be cancelled in June 2021 or later, you will not be charged for your reserved guest room if you cancel your reservations before the 23 Sep 2021.

Also for the 2021 reunion, I will request that only those who have received the COVID vaccination attend the reunion. I will not require the submittal of supportive documentation, but the registration form will require a validating signature. This and all our reunions must not have a high probability of spreading diseases.

*Howard Dobson*

## AN ERRANT-TORPEDO INCIDENT WITH USS SAM HOUSTON

**Dennis Johnson** (LT, Blue, 1968-1970) sent the following recollection:

*Just finished reading the newsletter (your great newsletter!) and really enjoyed "catching up" from a unique perspective. Thanks!!*

*The Tang article triggered my memory that Sam Houston also got hit by a circling Mark 14 Torpedo. Have you heard this story previously?*

*Briefly it was 1968, and Captain Alford wanted the Fire Control Team and Torpedomen to go through the exercise of actually firing a torpedo. We came out of Holy Loch and fired the torpedo at a tug boat. It circled and luckily hit the boat directly on an I-beam that supported the outer skin of the ballast tank. A small dent, and we went on patrol without a problem.*

*It showed us all that those torpedoes never did get fixed!*

**Ed. note:** An arousing revelation! I wonder what subsequent actions were taken to preclude a recurrence with a live weapon.

*Howard Dobson*

## RESTOCK OF USS SAM HOUSTON BALL CAPS

At the 2018 reunion, we sold out of the SSBN boat ball caps for enlisted individuals. After that reunion, I forgot to place an order and did not remember until January 2020. I placed an order in February 2020, but I was unaware that the vendor never submitted the order until 04 Jan 2021. (The vendor uses a subcontractor to produce the ball caps.)

The COVID Crisis caused confusion. I was under the impression that the crisis had caused the contractor to close. In August 2020, I contacted the vendor via e-mail, and he told me that everything was OK. On 04 Jan 2021, I checked again with the vendor and learned that the order had never been placed! That order has now been placed, and I can expect to receive the caps in February 2021. Many members have paid for their caps at the 2018 reunion. I have that list and will mail those caps as soon I receive them.

Pictures of the various items available are shown on the following page. If anyone desires to purchase a cap, please contact me. Prices are included with the items.

*Howard Dobson*

**RESTOCK OF USS SAM HOUSTON BALL CAPS (cont.)**



SSBN Officer-Gold Dolphins



SSN Officer-Gold Dolphins



SSBN Enlisted-Silver Dolphins



SSN Enlisted-Silver Dolphins



Plank Owner Hat Pin



Lady's First Mate Cap



Lady's' Sweetheart Visor

Out-of-pocket costs for items:

- All ball caps and lady's visor: \$28 each.
- Plank Owner Hat Pin **ordered alone**: \$8.
- Plank Owner Hat Pin included with a ball cap/visor: add \$5 to the cap/visor total.

Please mail a check or money order payable to "USS Sam Houston" to our Treasurer at the address below. **Ensure that you specify which type ball cap(s) you are ordering.**

**Mark Manzer**  
**10118 NE 41st Ave**  
**Vancouver WA 98686-5811**

## PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PATCH RELATED TO AN SSBN?

I recently received the items pictured on this page from the sister of **Joe Bryan** [MT3(SS), Blue, 1963-1964; Eternal Patrol].

Although all shipmates aboard any submarine perform a significant task that is essential to the operation of that submarine, the SSBN class boat was developed primarily to launch ballistic missiles. For this reason, I say the “most significant” patch.



The plaque at the left is interesting for a couple of reasons: 1) it represents the “Submarine Force U.S. Atlantic Fleet,” and 2) it has the statement “Pax Per Tridentem.” The translation of this Latin statement is “Peace through the Trident.” The word *trident* cannot refer to the ballistic missile with that name which would be developed about 3 decades later; rather, it refers to the weapon used by the Greek sea god, Poseidon, and his Roman counterpart, Neptune. All the blue paint used on the plaque has some minor scrapes. I’ll look for an artist to touch up those areas. The work might require repainting everything blue for color match, and that would be OK.

**Howard Dobson**

## BRUCE FULBRIGHT IN "THE SHAFT"

The following article appeared in "The Shaft—Patrol 25":

*Dear Shaft,*

*Would you believe B. Fulbright spent three hours in front of a mirror combing his hair, twisting his moustache, and even flexing his muscles before he spoke. Guess what he said: "I sure hope my girl loves me as much as I do!"*

**Ed. Note:** I can believe every word of that article! Patrol 25 was my first patrol, and although I did not witness that particular incident, I did witness a couple of similar incidents in which **Bruce Fulbright** [MM1(SS), Gold, 1965-1970] was combing and recombining his hair and twisting moustache for hours in front of the mirror in the Berthing Compartment Head! Thus, I have no trouble believing that what he said upon speaking during the Shaft-reported incident is unaltered and 100% accurate!—[Howard Dobson](#).

## SHIPMATES SOUGHT

**Jim Madden** [FN(SS), Blue, 1962-1964] provided the names of the following shipmates who were not on our roster and whom he suspects are not on Eternal Patrol:

- **Larry Wright**, TM2(SS)
- **Steve Miller**, MTC(SS)

Both were aboard for Patrols 3, 5, and 7 from early 1963 to May 1964. Jim believes that Steve lived or lives in the Las Vegas area.

If anyone has any potential leads for these shipmates, please inform me. I'll try to find them.

The major issues that I have with trying to locate these shipmates whether alive or on Eternal Patrol are:

- Neither is/was a member of the USSVI.
- Their last names are commonplace; too many to sort through.

I have access to a limited amount of demographic information that is public information, but having only their commonplace last names yields numerous possibilities. Even searching for Steve Miller in Las Vegas returns many persons. Without a postal address, I cannot limit the possibilities with such searches. This situation is also true for those who have departed for Eternal Patrol.

[Howard Dobson](#)

## A REMEMBRANCE OF A SHIPMATE ON ETERNAL PATROL

**Walt Young** [EM1(SS), Gold, 1975-1979] remembers **Robert Miller** mentioned in the previous newsletter:

*I was sorry to see Bob Miller passed in 2015. He was a fun Chief of RC Div. A little known fact about him: he was on the Thresher crew, [but was] attending a school when the ship was lost. It was pretty devastating to him as you can imagine. Anyway, I remember him well.*

*I also want to mention that all the boomers in Subron 15 visited Chinhae, Korea in the late 1970s. I believe 609B was the first boat to visit from the sub group. Sam Houston visited Chinhae each patrol. I know [that the] Gold crew was there on patrols 46, 48, & 50. Patrol 46 occurred in April '77; Patrol 48, in December '78. Patrol 50 occurred in March '79; I was not on Patrol 50 but still in Pearl Harbor. One shipmate won a raffle to leave the boat mid-patrol: that was EM1(SS) Joe (I forgot his last name.). He came aboard as leading EM1 when Tim Kroha left. Anyway, 609 visited Chinhae 6 times between both crews that I know of. Between the other 7 or so boats in Subron 15, Chinhae was visited a lot, and it broke the patrols up for a little liberty.*

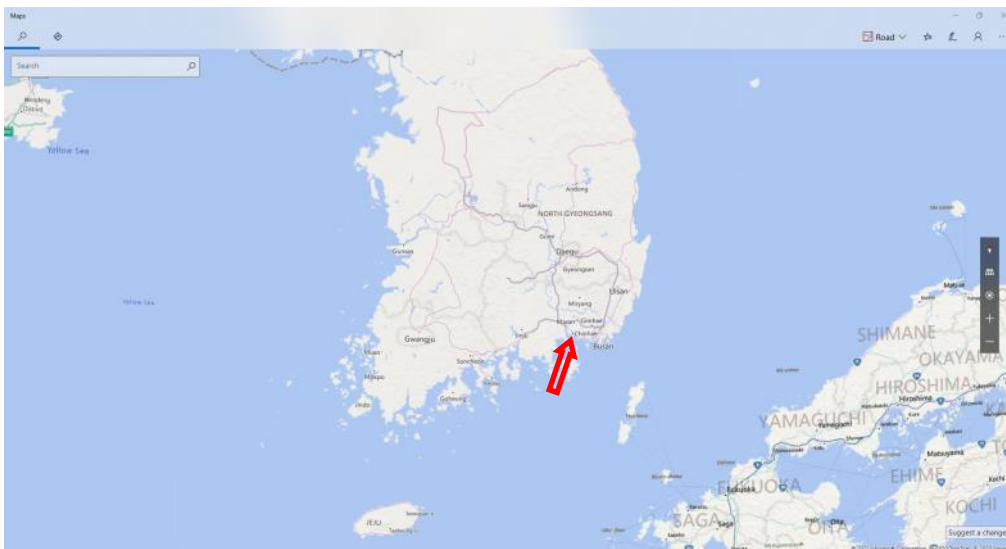
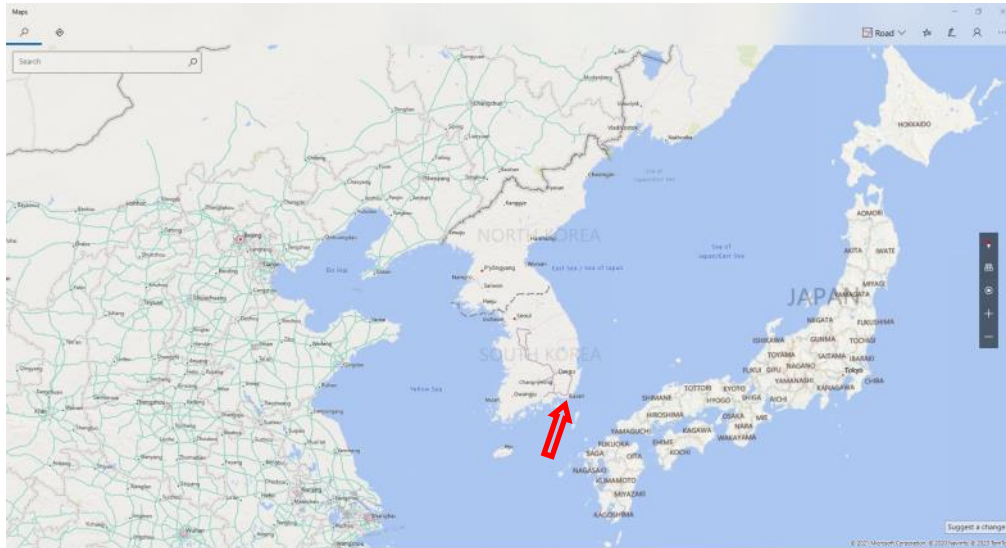
## “CHINHAE CHATTER”

The “Chinhae Chatter” was the well-deserved result of my having stated that **USS Sam Houston** made the only port of call by an SSBN while on patrol—at Izmir, Turkey. I also stated the incorrect year of the first Chinhae visit as 1973. The latter was a typo by the person who sent me the information about the visit. Many of our veterans quickly corrected me on both accounts, and in doing so, provided some significant history about the boat—and visits by other SSBNs—that I was unaware of. This stroke of fortune is so noteworthy that the information provided to me should be shared among our members. Thus, this lengthy article shares much of what I received. Some discussions involved attempts to establish actual dates of the ports of call at Chinhae, South Korea. Initially in the e-mail discussions being circulated, the members were depending on their memories, and some “sworn” clashes resulted. But soon after, three members had located a website that has a list of all SSBNs that made ports of call at Chinhae. But lo and behold, a couple of dates for **USS Sam Houston** were challenged!

In this article, I’ve eliminated most of the discussions that were solely devoted to establishing precise dates, and I am concentrating on events—personal and boat-related—that occurred during the visits. These are real and told by those who experienced them.

Keep in mind that Communist North Korea was nearly as much of a problem to the world during those years as it is today, and this was likely the basis for the ports of call at Chinhae.

Chinhae is located west of Busan, South Korea, a city identified in the upper map. The zoom in of the lower map identifies the precise location of Chinhae. The city has a straight-line distance of about 25 miles from the center of Busan.



## "CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)

**Robert "Tim" France (LCDR, O72 and Blue, 1972-1976):**

Yes, we were very much in overhaul in December 1973! I remember a celebration of our one-year anniversary of being in the dry dock that fall. The cooks constructed a large cake shaped like the dry dock with a model submarine on the "blocks" in it. I can't remember when we finally undocked, but it was well past the anniversary celebration.

As to the port visit at Chinhae, I have a hand written letter Captain Will Rich wrote me telling me about the visit. He was a great captain! That was the patrol after I left. When I was XO on Von Steuben Gold, I made two patrols after overhaul and shakedown, and the patrol after I left, they made a port visit in Barbados. I was 2-for-2 in missing out on mid-patrol, port visits. When I was CO on Francis Scott Key Gold, on my second patrol after overhaul and shakedown, in January 1987, I finally got one! It was a long patrol—84 days—due to maintenance issues on other C4 boats in Squadron 16, but 61 days into the run, we made a port visit in Bermuda—the first ever for a U.S. SSBN. I am pretty sure that port visit was specifically set up for me and my crew by Captain Ron Wiltsie, who was CincLantFlt J34, the Strategic Ops boss for the Atlantic Fleet boomers: the same Captain Ron Wiltsie who was my skipper on the Big Sam for overhaul, shakedown and change of homeport to Pearl.

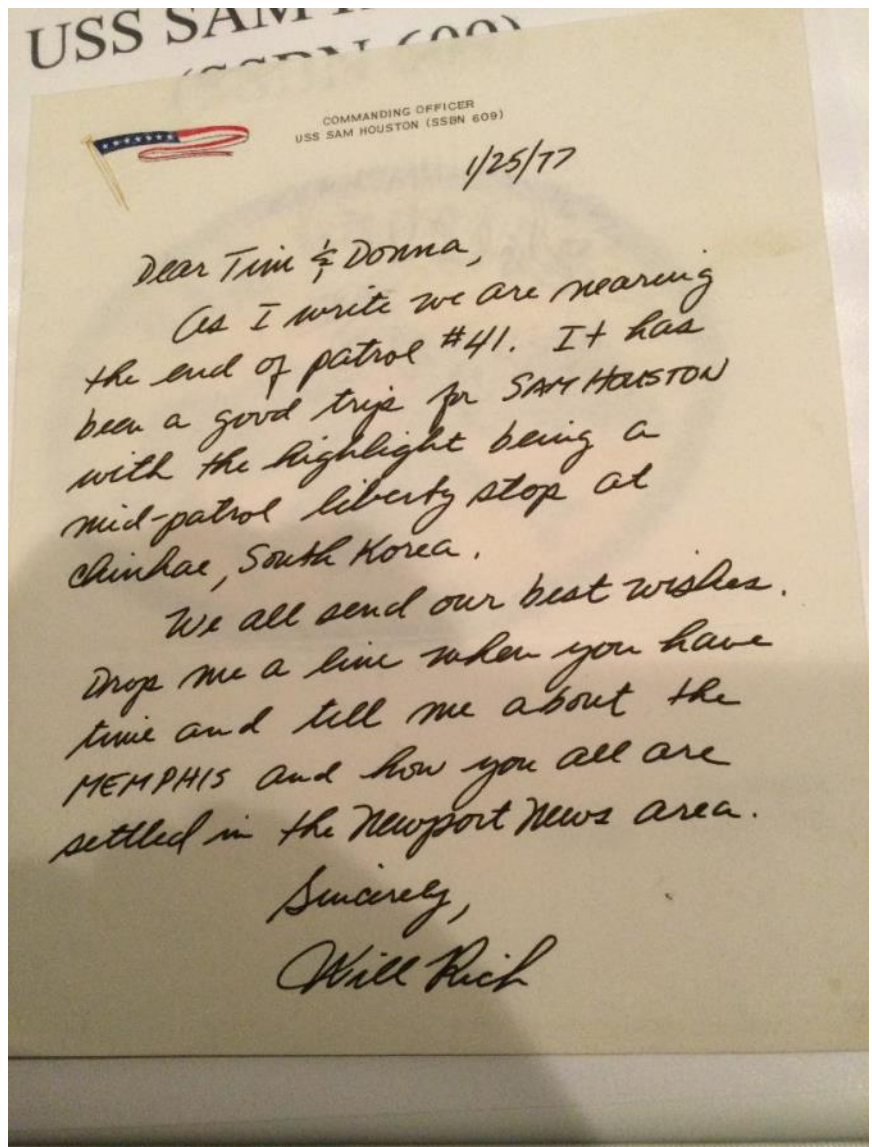
Several months ago, I tracked him down, living in Williamsburg, and we had a good conversation about our days together on the Big Sam. He retired shortly after my port visit. One of the memories I had was about our crew certification before our sea trials in that overhaul. The Phase 2 Certification consisted of a 40-hour, fast cruise followed by an 8-hour exam where the cert team ran us through all the paces so we could demonstrate that we could safely take the boat to sea. I was the OOD for the last mid-watch before the inspection team arrived. We were simulating underway and carrying out various evolutions such as coming to periscope depth, snorkeling, copying the broadcast, and so forth. Of course, many of these evolutions would require the captain's permission. On my first call to Captain Wiltsie, when I asked him for permission for whatever that evolution was, I had obviously awakened him, and he groggily responded, "You have permission to do anything you want." I took him at his word and didn't call him again for the rest of the watch, carrying all the scheduled evolutions while he slept. I was relieved at 6 A.M. or so, made my tour, and went to his stateroom to report my relief. I woke him up and went through all the things we had done and told him I took him at his word for all the permissions I hadn't called him for. He thanked me for his sleep, and I went and laid down for a half hour or so before getting up to face the inspection team.

Good memories of my 4 years on the Big Sam!

Regards,

Tim

NavOps 1972-1976; Blue crew after crew split.



## **"CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)**

**Randy Despain [MM2(SS), Blue, 1977-1980]:**

*If you are not aware, the Blue crew made stops in Chinhae three times for 3 days each while I was on her: August 1978, September 1979, and April 1980. 1 day on watch; 2 days of liberty. They even had buses to Seoul to shop in the markets. "Duffy's" was the enlisted club; they allowed "ladies" in to mingle with the sailors . . . .*





## "CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)

**George Kull** [FTB1(SS), Gold, 1977-1981]

*I might add that Chinhae was bitterly cold and snowing. I was on the gold crew, and I thought that it was later, like '77 or '78, and we were there right at Christmastime. Of course, we were all from Hawaii/Guam, and we were never told about a rare port call and to pack a winter jacket. Everyone went right to the Korean market area—freezing to death—and bought those poor-quality coats for very little money. It was a real, third world country back then. It might have been MM3(SS) Brewbaker—not sure of the name—that almost died of hypothermia. Everyone was pounding drinks at the base bar, and he wandered out front and fell over in the snow. It was snowing hard enough that he was mostly buried! Well, he almost died from exposure before someone saw him there on his way out!*

*I was on the Gold crew with Lt. George E. Beaton listed on eternal patrol.*

**Karl Schab** [FTB2(SS), Blue, 1976-1979], **Jim Franklin** [STS1(SS), Blue, 1976-1980], and **Don "Gabby" Rairdan** [MM2(SS), Blue, 1975-1977].

These shipmates submitted the following list of SSBN visits at Chinhae in response to others attempting to determine precise dates of ports of call by **USS Sam Houston** and subsequent chaos. The list is from a website of the Federation of American Scientists. The link to that website is [When the Boomers Went to South Korea – Federation Of American Scientists \(fas.org\)](http://www.fas.org/when-the-boomers-went-to-south-korea).

Some members challenged the accuracy and completeness of data in the list. Nonetheless, it's the best that we have.

By the way, I noticed the name at the bottom of the list: *Hans M. Kristensen*. This person produced a list of all COs of the boat that I obtained about 15 years ago. That list later became known to have some inaccuracies. Hans lived in Germany at the time.

—Howard Dobson

### U.S. SSBN Visits to South Korea\*

<u>Dates of Visit</u>	<u>Submarine (hull number)</u>
<b>1976</b>	
19-22 Dec	USS Sam Houston (SSBN-609)
<b>1978</b>	
?	USS Abraham Lincoln (SSBN-602)
?	USS Ethan Allen (SSBN-608)
<b>1979</b>	
1-3 Feb	USS Thomas Edison (SSBN-610)
21-23 Feb	USS John Marshall (SSBN-611)
10-14 Jul	USS Thomas Jefferson (SSBN-618)
30 Jul-3 Aug	USS Patrick Henry (SSBN-599)
13-15 Aug	USS Thomas Edison (SSBN-610)
6-10 Sep	USS George Washington (SSBN-598)
17-21 Sep	USS Sam Houston (SSBN-609)
3-7 Oct	USS Robert E. Lee (SSBN-601)
8-12 Oct	USS Ethan Allen (SSBN-608)
16-20 Oct	USS Thomas Jefferson (SSBN-618)
22-26 Nov	USS Thomas Edison (SSBN-610)
15-19 Dec	USS John Marshall (SSBN-611)
24-28 Dec	USS Sam Houston (SSBN-609)
31 Dec-	USS Robert E. Lee (SSBN-601)
<b>1980</b>	
-4 Jan	USS Robert E. Lee (SSBN-601)
12-16 Feb	USS Thomas Jefferson (SSBN-618)
29 Feb-4 Mar	USS Thomas Edison (SSBN-610)
27 Mar-31 Mar	USS George Washington (SSBN-598)
11-14 Apr	USS Sam Houston (SSBN-609)
24-27 Apr	USS Ethan Allen (SSBN-608)
26-30 May	USS Patrick Henry (SSBN-599)
2-5 Jun	USS Thomas Edison (SSBN-610)
9-12 Jun	USS John Marshall (SSBN-611)
23-29 Jun	USS George Washington (SSBN-598)
19-21 Aug	USS Thomas Jefferson (SSBN-618)
15-17 Sep	USS Patrick Henry (SSBN-599)
5-8 Oct	USS John Marshall (SSBN-611)
10-13 Oct	USS George Washington (SSBN-598)
4-9 Nov	USS Robert E. Lee (SSBN-601)
29-31 Dec	USS Patrick Henry (SSBN-599)
<b>1981</b>	
12-16 Jan	USS George Washington (SSBN-598)
8-11 Mar	USS Robert E. Lee (SSBN-601)
<b>35 visits</b>	<b>by 9 SSBNs</b>

\* All visits were to Chinhae.

Hans M. Kristensen/FAS, 2011

## "CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)

**Bruce Fibranz** [RMCS(SS), Gold, 1975-1978]:

Re: the port call to Chinhae, Korea. I was on board when we made that port of call. I do not recall any attempt of frogmen attempting to board. We were in the area to provide ASW services to the fleet. We had a port call of at least two days there. I don't remember the actual dates, but it was the rainy season, and the cherry trees were in full bloom.

**Ed. Note:** Bruce's third sentence is his response to an e-mail from a Blue crew member who mentioned that he had heard some scuttlebutt about Korean frogmen attempting to board the boat during a Gold Crew visit. Another shipmate has another interesting and possible explanation of the event. That shipmate's rendition is included later in this lengthy article.

—Howard Dobson

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**Bob Launius** [HM2(SS), Blue, 1976-1977]:

So this log date is when we surfaced. I along with Captain Rich was on the Conn on 19 Dec 1977.

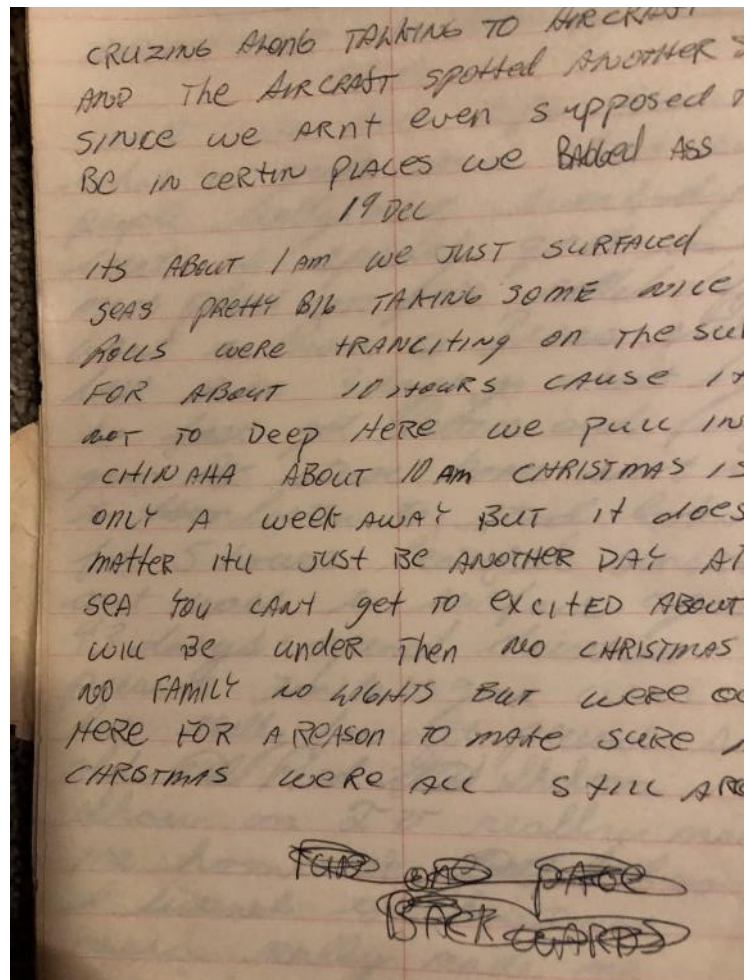
Never heard anything from Gold crew on their visit; so, I say "Bullshit" [about the Korean frogmen]!

We who stood Topside Watch had billy clubs; no side arms. If frogmen from South Korea were known, we never ever heard about it! Ever!!!

At the right is my log; the year left blank. Won't include the next page as we went by bus to Busan—"Texas Street." Yes, ha! I was single, and so was everyone with me. Every member of USS Sam Houston got a penicillin shot after [that] port visit!

**Ed. note:** The right edge of the picture of Bob's log was not present in his original picture. You might be able to determine the missing word(s) without much difficulty.

—Howard Dobson



## **"CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)**

**Jim Booth** [STS1(SS), Blue & SSN, 1978-1981]

*We (the Blue Crew) had a Korean National jump from the water barge while me and Dave Schlessinger were standing topside watch. Dave was my Sentry, and I was going to go forward of the sail to check the hoses and told Dave to keep an eye on a suspicious-looking guy on the water barge. While I was forward of the sail, he jumped across and made it on board. Dave hollered, and I came running. [I] yelled, "Halt. Stop, motherf\*\*\*ker" and had no effect." He did, however, understand the sound of a .45 slide slamming home. [He] stopped dead in his tracks! After the Repel Boarders was over, [I] got my ass chewed by the XO for not shooting him. Then in private, he thanked me for not shooting him—would have been a lot of paperwork. I think that was around the fall of '79 or '80.*

**Ed. note:** This might have been the incident mentioned earlier that was mistaken for Korean frogmen boarding the boat.

—Howard Dobson

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**Tetus "Tom" Rogers** [MM2(SS), Blue, 1975-1978]:

*I remember while on the Sam Houston, Capt. Rich told us we were the FIRST and not to screw it up or we would be the LAST. We left there with berthing full of those big, thick, Korean blankets.*

---

**Steve Wilson** [QM2(SS), Gold, 1973-1977]:

*I was on the gold crew, and I don't remember any frogman event. We anchored way out in the bay, and [it] was snowy. I know it was cold, and the Korean sailors took us to shore in old, open, troop-landing boats. Water in their bilges was ankle-deep.*

---

**John Hyland** (LT, Gold, 1964-1968) and (CAPT & CO, SSN, 1981-1983):

*USS Abraham Lincoln did not visit Chinhae in 1978. I relieved the CO in April 1978 and made an alert patrol out of Guam in early 1978. My counterpart then relieved me in Guam and then transited to Pearl Harbor where I relieved him, combined crews, and conducted local operations in 1978-79. In late 1979, Abraham Lincoln made her final patrol which ended with her arrival at SubBase Bangor.*

*In your data, her visit is noted with a question mark, and I can confirm that the question mark was warranted.*

---

**Richard Cook** (LCDR, SSN, 1989-1990):

*I was Engineer when SSN 609 tied up at Chinhae during our deployment in the fall of 1989. It would have been October or November, I believe. As I recall, we were there for maybe 2-3 days as a liberty call. My most vivid recollection is that I was busy with my duties on board and never left the ship the whole time—until the morning we were leaving. Unwilling to pass up the opportunity to set foot on Korean soil, I went up and walked down the pier and back for a minute before the Maneuvering Watch was set.*

---

**This shipmate's identity is omitted because of the content of his message below. I will delete the e-mail that he sent me and will not be able to recall his name.**

*Chinhae, South Korea: I signed 4 papers that we were never there! I didn't see a North Korean fishing scow fire a machine gun across our bow or the South Korean Navy blow them out of the water. We were never there!*

## **"CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)**

**John "Lippy" Lepine** [MM2(SS), Gold, 1976-1979]:

*I, too, remember that mid-patrol break [the visit in Dec 1976]. As I recall, we were originally supposed to visit Pearl, but we got extended to cover for another boat that developed a problem. And instead—later than expected—we went to Chinhae with most of our crew being very low or out of cigarettes. I fondly recall a wonderful on-base bar known as "Duffy's Tavern" where the local "working girls" could only enter under the escort of active duty personnel. Today, the club is listed on-line as "Duffy's All Hands Club."*

*Also, I just remembered that we were anchored out to a buoy in the harbor, and expected two barges: one to off-load trash and another to on-load fresh water. When the first, nasty barge tied up, the non-English-speaking Koreans on board seemed quite agitated as we began throwing our trash on it. We finally figured out that this was actually the water barge! Somehow, the decision was made for them to just go and keep the trash.*

*Oh ya, I was the Night Mess Cook and was supposed to have Cinderella Liberty the first night, but missed the last small boat back . . . it's a long story.*

---

**Morgan Evans** [RMC(SS), Blue, 1976-1979]:

*Morgan Michael Evans, RMCS(SS) on left visited Chinhae aboard the Sam Houston Blue Crew in 1977. Photo was taken when he went to paint an orphanage. Don't know who the other person is?*

**Ed. Note:** The "other person" not only has an "American" appearance but also seems to be wearing a uniform similar to that of Morgan. Perhaps he could be a CPO or officer from the boat—maybe from elsewhere. If anyone recognizes him, let me know.

—Howard Dobson



---

**Walt Young** [EM1(SS), Gold, 1975-1979]:

*Well, this [the content of the Chinhae-Visit List] is very interesting. I went to Chinhae twice with 609G: once in '77, and once in '78. The list Karl provided does account for either visit!*

*I know Rob Scott, MT2 from the gold crew can validate that 609G was there. He has pictures of Sam and crew from our visits.*

*I'll let this rest now, but it is sure interesting how records are not too accurate for this period. In fact, when you look up 609's history, it is missing from the Charleston overhaul through the end of her deterrent-patrol duty—'74-'80.*

## **"CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)**

**Don "Gabby" Rairdan [MM2(SS), Blue, 1975-1977]:**

*I was part of that first visit in Dec. '76. It was my 3rd and last patrol aboard the Big Sam. I remember transiting on the surface in the early morning before dawn. I was able to go up and stand next to Capt. Rich in the sail. The water was being split by the sail and creating quite a spectacle because of bioluminescence. By the time we got to Chinhae, it was daylight. Even though I was M Division, my Maneuvering Watch for that patrol was the Forward Capstan Operator—quite a treat as I was able to be outside in the fresh air and sunlight.*

*We were not allowed to moor at the pier; so, we tied up to a buoy in the harbor. I remember it taking several tries to get the line over to the buoy. The Korean Air Force also put on quite an air show for us.*

*My section had the duty that first day, but I was the alternate. I took American dollars from the other guys ashore and got them changed into the Korean won [currency]. Since the shuttles only ran in the morning and evening, I spent the day ashore walking around with a lot of money—a little scary. Once I got back to the sub that evening and gave everyone their money, we were off duty and took the shuttle back ashore. Spent the night in Chinhae and the next day went shopping and exploring the city. I remember getting into a cab, and the driver's hand went on the horn and his foot to the floor. Didn't know if we were going to survive the ride! I still have the mink blanket and wall clock I bought from the street vendors. All this was quite an experience and cultural shock for a young farm boy from a small town in Washington. We still talk about Chinhae at our mini reunions.*



**Don at the  
Forward Capstan**



**The Clock  
That Don Purchased**



## "CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)

Rob Scott [MT2(SS), Gold, 1976-1979]:

Here is what I recall on the Sam Houston (G) going to Chinhae. We had the boat Feb '77 to the end of May '77 (I looked in my service record, that is when I got the 2nd star in my patrol pin for patrol 42). We were supposed to leave Guam and go to Hawaii for Torpedo Ops. After we were out for a week or two, orders were changed. A boat could not cover its targets, and we had to pick them up; so, no Hawaii. I do remember that the smokers only brought enough cigarettes for the trip to Hawaii but now the smokers were running out of cigarettes. [Cf. see Lippy Lepine's submission on p. 12.] We pulled into Chinhae around early April, and it was rainy and cold. No one, of course, had warm clothes; so, these were the first things we would buy—a warm jacket. The reactor was critical while there; so, the nukes were port and starboard. I think we were there for 3 days.

The 2nd time Sam Houston (G) pulled in was December '78, Patrol 48—my last one. This time, it wasn't really a big surprise. Before pulling into Korea, we were taking part in some fleet exercises where we were playing fast attack. Capt. William Owens was the CO then. This time the reactor was turned off, and we were on the diesel the whole time there. The boat was cold because when the ventilation heaters were turned on, the dust buildup caused them to smoke. Below are some pictures from the Patrol 48 at Chinhae.



Tonnage sank during the ASW exercises with the fleet prior to the port of call at Chinhae.



Boarding a tender for liberty.



Rob Scott, MT2(SS)



Walt Young, EM2(SS)

## **"CHINHAE CHATTER" (cont.)**

**Emmet "Dewain" Forbis (LT, Gold and SSN, 1979-1982)**

*Gold crew was there Dec '79, my first patrol. We provided gifts to an orphanage and a children's hospital. We had a crewman snagged at the gate taking 5 cans of coffee grounds off base to sell.*

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**Mark Manzer [STS(SS), Gold & SSN, 1979-1982]:**

*Pretty sure it was Patrol 52; we stopped over Christmas. The USO sponsored several events, and I went on 3 of them:*

- *They bused us several hours away to an ancient capital, Kwangju. Had a chance to tour the area and see some museums, temples, and impressive architecture.*
- *We went to Busan sightseeing, then bought armloads of toys and food to deliver to an orphanage. We visited with the kids, sang them Christmas carols in English; they sang us Christmas carols in Korean.*
- *Did much the same as the orphanage trip, but this time at a children's hospital with the rest of the time for sightseeing.*

*It was fun to have a mid-patrol break for Christmas!*

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I thank all who commented on Chinhae ports of call based on a discussion of the initial visit in December 1976. I'm certain that many of our members will have learned as much about the activities of **USS Sam Houston** as I have. I encourage all members to provide their specific memories about anything that might be of interest to all: serious, funny, indifferent, personal, ship-involvement—all topics except those related to nuclear propulsion or any other restricted topics that I am unaware of.

I enjoy learning about things that the boat was involved in before and after my stint aboard and suspect other shipmates feel the same way. Our newsletters are a great means of sharing your memories with others. They are documents of record and will somehow be preserved for posterity. I don't know yet how that will be accomplished; I've just begun to think about it. My initial thought was to consult the USSVI; Facebook might be another possibility. I'll figure out something. The Navy would not be interested.

Anyway, continue to submit your memories. We have a great newsletter that is on par with reputed organizations such as the USSVI and Tin Can Sailors (DesVets). It's all thanks to our members because of the memories that you submit—not because I am the editor of our newsletter. I'll do my best to produce a great newsletter, but I need information from our members. Recognition also goes to **Ray Higgins** [MM1(SS); Gold, Overhaul '66, and Blue; 1965-1970] and his partner, Josi (a retired school teacher), who perform superb jobs of proofreading all large documents that I produce.

Keep up the great work and thanks,

*Howard Dobson*

## **A BAFFLING PUZZLE (humor)**

A little, silver-haired lady calls her neighbor and says, "Please come over here and help me. I have a killer jigsaw puzzle, and I can't figure how to get started." Her neighbor asks, "What is it supposed to be when it is finished?" The little, silver-haired lady says, "According to the picture on the box, it's a rooster." Her neighbor decides to go over and help with the puzzle. She lets him in and shows him where she has the puzzle spread all over the table.

He studies the pieces for a moment, looks at the box, then turns to her and says, "First of all, no matter what we do, we're not going to be able to assemble these pieces into anything resembling a rooster."

He takes her hand as says, "Secondly, I want you to relax. Let's have a nice cup of tea, and then," he said with a deep sigh, "Let's put all of the Corn Flakes back in the box!"

—submitted by **Charlie Klein** [EN1(SS), Blue, 1960-1965; Plank Owner]

## BE CAREFUL WHEN CHALLENGING CHILDREN! (humor)

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal, its throat is very small. The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it is physically impossible.

The little girl said, "When I get to heaven, I will ask Jonah." The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?" The little girl replied, "Then you ask him!"

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A kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around and observe each child's work. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a stroke or looking up from her drawing, the little girl replied, "They will in a minute!"

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A Sunday School teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her 5 and 6 year old's. After explaining the commandment to "honor" thy father and mother, she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?" Immediately, one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, "Thou shall not kill!"

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One day, a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head. She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, "Why are some of your hairs white, Mum?" Her mother replied, "Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or be unhappy, one of my hairs turns white."

The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, "Mummy, how come ALL grandma's hairs are white?"

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The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group picture. "Just think how nice it will be to look at it when you are all grown up and say, "There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer," or "That's Michael, he's a doctor."

A small voice at the back of the room rang out, "And there's the teacher; she's dead."

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A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. Trying to make the matter clearer, she said, "Now, class, if I stood on my head, the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I would turn red in the face." "Yes," the class said. "Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary position, the blood doesn't run into my feet"?

A little fellow in the back shouted, "Cause your feet ain't empty!"

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The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the front of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note and posted on the apple tray: "**Take only ONE; God is watching.**"

At the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A note with a child's handwriting proclaimed, "**Take all you want. God is watching the apples.**"

—submitted by [Charlie Klein](#) [EN1(SS), Blue, 1960-1965; Plank Owner]



## A CHARLATIN'S DESCRIPTION OF A SITUATION (humor)

A Russian Jew was finally allowed to emigrate to Israel. At the Moscow airport, a Customs Officer found a statue in his luggage and asked "What's that?" The man replied, "What's that? Wrong question, Comrade! You should have asked, 'Who is he?' This is a statue of Comrade Vladimir Lenin. He laid the foundation of socialism and created the future and prosperity of the Russian people. I'm taking it with me as a reminder of our dear hero." The Customs Officer let him go without further inspection.

At the Tel Aviv airport, the Israeli Customs Officer also asked the man, "What's that?" He replied, "What's that? Wrong question, sir! You should have asked, 'Who is he?' This is Vladimir Lenin, the bastard who caused me, a Jew, to leave Russia. I'm taking this statue with me so I can curse him every day." The Israeli Customs Officer said, "I apologize. Sir, you are cleared to go."

Settling into his new house, he put the statue on the table. To celebrate his arrival, he invited his friends and relatives to dinner. One of his friends said, "Who's he?" He replied, "My dear friend, 'Who's he is the wrong question.' You should have asked, 'What's that?'"

This is 10 kg of solid gold that I managed to bring with me without paying any customs duty or tax!

*The CONCLUSION: You might bode well by describing the same shit to different people in different ways.*

—submitted by **Charlie Klein** [EN1(SS), Blue, 1960-1965; Plank Owner]

## A COMMENTARY ABOUT ETERNAL PATROL

When you receive orders for Eternal Patrol, the SHVA should be made aware of your departure as soon as practicable afterward. The sure way to accomplish this is that any of your survivors contact any member of the SHVA by any means convenient to them. Some such means include contacting one of the SHVA shipmates whom you had maintained contact with, using the SHVA's website to contact the organization, or posting a notice on the USS Sam Houston's page on Facebook. (The latter two options will likely be available for many years to come.)

You served your country with dignity and devotion and took an oath that you would sacrifice your life to protect the freedoms of this country. This was not and is not something to be taken lightly although some certain groups in our country today downplay the significance of such service if they recognize it at all. The SHVA as well as most military-related, fraternal organizations recognize the service of deceased veterans in different ways. The SHVA conducts formal Memorial Services and has a Table of Remembrance at its reunions. These events memorialize our deceased veterans and recognize the service of all veterans past and present. Thus, the SHVA must be made aware of its veterans who have been summoned for Eternal Patrol. Having been made aware of a veteran having departed for Eternal Patrol, the association will not devote time attempting to locate the addresses of those who have passed on.

To help ensure that someone of the SHVA is made aware of your passing on, I request that you print the last page of this newsletter and place it with papers that will become relevant upon your having been summoned for Eternal Patrol. I REQUEST THAT YOU DO SO **NOW** TO PRECLUDE THE TASK BEING FORGOTTEN. (For those who receive hard copies of the newsletter, I have included a copy of the last page.)

Thanks for your consideration in this matter.

**Howard Dobson**

# IMPORTANT

Upon my passing, please inform the *USS Sam Houston Veterans' Assn.* of which I was a member. It is important that the group is aware of my passing. Three of the most convenient means might be:

- Contact the person at the bottom of this page.
- Website: <[www.USSSamHouston.org](http://www.USSSamHouston.org)>.
- The USS Sam Houston page on Facebook.
- Contact a member(s) listed below who has been a close friend(s):

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Chairman of the *USS Sam Houston Veterans' Assn.* (in 2021):

Howard Dobson  
28 Colony Blvd  
Wilmington DE 19802-1402

Phone: 302-764-1197

E-Mail: [howardvaldobson@verizon.net](mailto:howardvaldobson@verizon.net)

Note: Any contact information might be outdated by the time of my passing. If so, be as creative as you can to contact any member of the *USS Sam Houston Veterans' Assn.*