

**Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr., U.S. Navy**  
**U.S. Sixth Fleet Working Jacket Donation**  
**Texas Tech University Vietnam Center and Archive**

**14 July 2011**

On 25 June 2011, the first full crew complement reunion of the USS Sand Lance (SSN 660) was held in Charleston, South Carolina—the submarine’s first home port, as well as the historic site of Fort Sumter, where the first hostilities of the American Civil War had erupted 150 years earlier.

Lieutenant Colonel James G. Zumwalt, USMCR (Retired), Admiral Zumwalt’s surviving son, was invited as a “Key Note” Speaker at this reunion event. He supported efforts by the USS Sand Lance Reunion Committee to raise funds for the Crew in a silent auction by donating his father’s U.S. Navy Sixth Fleet Jacket to commemorate his father’s memory.

The jacket was subsequently purchased at the auction by Anna and Johnny Mays of Houston, Texas. Johnny Mays, USS Sand Lance Nuclear-Trained Commissioning Crew Member, believed the jacket to be of such significant intrinsic value that the Mays family then donated the jacket to the Texas Tech University Vietnam Center and Archive for display and the enjoyment of all visitors to the Museum!





**This Jacket Was Presented By: The Sixth Fleet To:**

**Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr. USN**

**Chief of Naval Operations 1970 to 1974**

**DONATED TO: TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY VIETNAM CENTER AND ARCHIVE: 14 July**  
**2011**

**By: Anna and Johnny Mays of Huston, Texas**

**Contributing Assistance by:**

**Lt. Col. James G. Zumwalt, USMCR Ret. Captain George "Bud" Baker, USN Ret.**

**Phillip W. Brunson, YNC (SS) Bernard F. O'Neill, USNR IC3 (SS)**

## **Abbreviated History of the USS Sand Lance (SSN 660)**

### **A United States Naval “Silent Service” Nuclear Powered Submarine**

The USS Sand Lance (SSN 660) was one of the U.S. Naval “Silent Service” Cold War work horses. She was built in Portsmouth Naval Ship Yard in Kittery, Maine. The Commissioning Commanding Officer was William A. Kennington, Commander USN at the time of construction. The submarine was brought into the Naval Silent Service Fleet under the direction and authority of Admiral Hyman Rickover, USN. One favorite saying of the Admiral was “My nuclear powered submarines are safe,” and by all accounts the USS Sand Lance (SSN 660) lived up to his highest performance standards.

### **Ship’s Abbreviated History**

Ship Contract Awarded	24	October 1963
Keel Laid	15	January 1965
Launched	11	November 1969
Placed in Service	04	January 1971
Initial Builder's Sea Trials	12	July 1971
Commissioned	25	September 1971
Delivered	01	October 1971
Initial Homeport, Charleston	01	October 1971
Final Homeport, Groton	05	April 1995
Inactivation Ceremony	15	January 1998
Final Departure from Homeport	04	February 1998
Deactivated	01	April 1998
Decommissioned	07	August 1998
Stricken Naval Vessel Register	07	August 1998
Entered Submarine Recycling	18	June 1999
Completed Submarine Recycling	30	August 1999

### **On Eternal Patrol**

September 11, 2001 Crew Member Casualty  
Lieutenant Commander Patrick Jude Murphy, USNR



## Chronological Record of the USS Sand Lance (SSN 660) listed by Commanding Officer:

### Commander William A. Kennington, U. S. Navy

	25 September	1971	Commissioned
September	December	1971	Shakedown Operations and Weapons Certification
January	December	1972	Local Operations Charleston Area
February	April	1973	CNO Special Operations
June	August	1973	CNO Special Operations
August	September	1973	Faslane Naval Base, Scotland
October	December	1973	Assigned to the Sixth Fleet (Egypt and Israel Conflict)

### Commander Robert L. Bovey, U. S. Navy

January	February	1974	Local Operations Charleston ( Sonar Evaluations)
March	April	1974	Operational Weapons Testing (MK48, SUBROC, CAPTOR)
September 74	March	1975	Mediterranean Deployment
February	April	1975	CNO Special Operations
April	December	1975	Local Operations Charleston (Sonar Evaluations)
		1976	Overhaul, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia

### Commander Michael A. Covell, U. S. Navy

		1977	Technical Evaluation of the AN/BQQ-5 Sonar System
		1978	A serious flooding event was averted during maintenance when the CO recognized that a flood prevention collar was being installed on the wrong seawater valve.
January	June	1978	Mediterranean Deployment
February	April	1979	CNO Special Operations SECNAV Navy Unit Commendation
	June	1979	Panama Canal Transit
June 79	January	1981	Re-Fueling, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, WA
	February	1981	Panama Canal Transit

### Commander Hugh M. Doherty, U. S. Navy

November 81	April	1982	Mediterranean Deployment
June 83	March	1984	(3) CNO Special Operations SECNAV Meritorious Unit Commendation

### Commander Orval L. Sweeney, U. S. Navy

May	July	1987	CNO Special Operations
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### Commander Hubert D. Hopkins, U. S. Navy

May 88		1989	Overhaul, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Kittery, Maine
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Commander Brian J. Rabe, U. S. Navy

July	December	1991	UNITAS XXXII (32-91)
	October	1991	Navigated Cape Horn
		1992	Western Atlantic, National Security Objectives

Commander Randall J. Slack, U. S. Navy

October 93	March	1994	Mediterranean Deployment
		1994	In 1994 Sand Lance, moored ahead of the Grayling in Charleston, almost sank next to the pier due to flooding in the ERLI when a main seawater valve was being removed for maintenance. The blank plates, which are placed over the hull penetrations by divers, were placed over the wrong main seawater openings. The flooding was stopped, but not before most of the ERLI was flooded.
January	February	1995	Western Atlantic Special Operations
	05 April	1995	Homeport Change, Charleston to Groton – CSS-2

Commander George H. Baker Jr., U. S. Navy

01 March	31 August	1996	ICE-X 96, Arctic Circle Patrol
05 June	14 June	1966	SORBET Royal 96 Operations, Submarine Rescue Exercise
	12 July	1996	Surfaced at the North Pole SECNAV Letter of Commendation Realm of the Arctic Circle Certificate The Domain of the Golden Dragon Certificate
01 July	December	1997	UNITAS XXXVIII (38-97) Deployment
17 July		1997	Order of the Spanishman Certificate
	October	1997	Navigated Cape Horn, Second Time
	30 November	1997	Imperium Neptuni Regis (Shellback) Certificate (Unitas 38-97)
	22 December	1997	Returned to Homeport after completing a Final Deployment Medical "M" Award
	15 January	1998	Inactivation Ceremony
	04 February	1998	Final Departure from homeport Groton
	08 February	1998	Panama Canal Transit Order of the Ditch Certificate
	February	1998	Final Blow from 660' during approach to Juan de Fuca Canyon, Pacific Northwest OPAREAS
	01 April	1998	Deactivation at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, WA
	01 April	1998	Last Cruise Certificate
	01 April	1998	Decommissioning Plank Owners Certificate
	07 August	1998	Decommissioned, Stricken from the Naval Vessel Register
	18 June	1999	Entered Submarine Recycling Program, Bremerton, WA
	30 August	1999	Completed Submarine Recycling Program, Bremerton, WA

## Reflections of a Commanding Officer

Does the USS Sand Lance (SSN 660) history end with the completion of the Submarine Recycling Program? Does Gene Fluckey's USS Barb cease to exist? Does the USS Sand Lance (SS 381) cease to exist? As we entered the shipyard for decommissioning, we preached that every dollar we saved in recycling the Sand Lance was one dollar more we had to spend toward the New Attack Submarine (now known as the Virginia Class SSN). The Decommissioning Crew finished Inactivation both early and under budget. Every day they were looking for ways to safely speed up the process. And through traditional submarine ingenuity, they found them!

Each new generation is the greatest because it stands on the shoulders of the previous. We recycle the old and keep the best parts to grow an entirely new class of American firepower. Though the last physical evidence of the USS Sand Lance (SSN 660) may have slipped away on 30 August 1999, so long as Americans yearn for freedom, she will live on. So long as Americans yearn for freedom, Sand Lance will never cease to exist. That history will always be a part of who we are. It's in our DNA. And I suspect that none of us would want it any other way.

*George 'Bud' Baker*

Captain George H. Baker Jr., U.S. Navy Retired  
Decommissioning Commanding Officer

### USS SAND LANCE (SSN 660) Awards include:

Secretary of the Navy Awards:

- Navy Unit Commendation
- Navy Expeditionary Medal
- Meritorious Unit Commendation
- Letter of Commendation

- Battle Efficiency "E" Awards
- Three Engineering "E" Awards
- Anti-Submarine Warfare "A" Awards
- Communications "C" Award
- Medical "M" Award

Website: [WWW.USSSANDLANCESSN660.COM](http://WWW.USSSANDLANCESSN660.COM)

