

Thresher Base
United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.
Chartered November 15, 1989
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States Government."



*O Father, King of earth and sea,
We dedicate this ship to thee.
In faith we send her on her way:
In faith to thee we humbly pray:
O hear from heaven our sailor's cry
And watch and guard her from on
high!*

62nd Anniversary Memorial Service for USS Thresher (SSN 593)



April 12, 2025
Robert W. Traip Academy

United States Ship Thresher (SSN 593)

Designed and built by the men and women of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, the keel of USS Thresher (SSN 593) was laid May 28, 1958.

In the early morning of April 10, 1963 off the coast of Cape Cod, Thresher began her final mission.

“We are experiencing minor difficulties, we have a positive up angle, and are attempting to blow. Will keep you informed,” she reported to her escort ship USS Skylark (ASR 20) just after 9:00 a.m. Shortly after, following an eerie rumble from the depths, there was silence.

Beneath the crushing depths, one hundred twenty-nine men were taken to their abiding resting place at the bottom of the sea, in an utterly final and terribly tragic loss of man and machine.

After an extensive underwater search utilizing the bathyscaph Trieste, oceanographic ship Mizar and other ships, Thresher’s shattered remains were located on the sea floor, some 8400 feet below the surface.

Deep sea photography, recovered artifacts and an evaluation of Thresher’s design and operations permitted a Court of Inquiry to determine that she probably sunk due to a piping failure, subsequent loss of power and inability to blow ballast tanks rapidly enough to avoid sinking.

Acknowledgements

The members of United States Submarine Veterans Thresher Base would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions towards making the 62nd Memorial Service a success:

Captain Michael C. Oberdorf, USN
Commander, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

CAPT Joseph Meier, USN
Commanding Officer,
Submarine Maintenance Engineering,
Planning and Procurement

R.W. Traip Academy and the Kittery School District

Michael Bracey
Son of Paul George Bracey, USN
Steward Third Class
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

LT Nathanael Gentilhomme, USN
Chaplain, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Crew Member Volunteers from
USS CHEYENNE (SSN 773)
USS NORTH DAKOTA (SSN 784)
USS WASHINGTON (SSN 787)
USS HAMPTON (SSN 767)

The family members of QM1(SS) Julius Francis Marullo, Jr., USN
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

Lori Arsenault and Deb Henderson
Daughters of ENCA(SS) Tilmon J. Arsenault
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

Scott McCord, USS Thresher Family Coordinator
Son of MM1 (SS) Donald J. McCord, USS Thresher

U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps
Dan Healy Division

CMDCM (SS) James Mandile, CMC Submarine Squadron TWO
CMDCM (SS) Arturo Plasencia, CMC Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Planning Committee, 62nd USS Thresher Memorial Service
Kevin and Robin Galeaz; Gary Hildreth; John McArdle;
Steve and Patti Reichle; Steve Cook; Jill Schock; Dick & Kathy Wood,
Roger Retzke, David Webster, Rich Switter, and Herman Bautzmann

**USS Thresher National Commemorative Monument
Arlington National Cemetery**



September 26, 2019



**United States Ship Thresher (SSN 593)
(continued)**

Over the next several years, a massive program was undertaken to correct design and construction problems on the Navy's existing nuclear powered submarines, and on those under construction and in planning. Following completion of this effort, the Navy has suffered no further losses of the kind that so tragically ended Thresher's brief service career.

From this tragic event the Submarine Safety (SUBSAFE) Program was established to assure implementation of recommendations resulting from findings of the Thresher Court of Inquiry and Thresher Design Appraisal Board. Today the technical and administrative requirements of the SUBSAFE Program continue to evolve, though the program's purpose remains resolute to provide maximum reasonable assurance that seawater is kept out of the submarine and that the submarine and crew can recover if there is a seawater casualty.

Today, America has the strongest and safest submarine force in history, and the men and women who go down to the sea in ships, leaving their friends and loved ones ashore, can rest a little easier in the knowledge that their safety has been assured by the men of Thresher.



Program

Greeting

Gary Hildreth
Former Commander, USSVI Thresher Base

Presentation of Colors

Naval Branch Health Clinic Color Guard
Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Pledge of Allegiance

All Hands

National Anthem

All Hands, Led By
Lori Arsenault & Debra (Arsenault) Henderson
Daughters of ENCA(SS) Tilmon J. Arsenault
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

Invocation

LT Nathanael Gentilhomme
Chaplain, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Introductions

Gary Hildreth
Former Commander, USSVI Thresher Base

Introductory Remarks

Captain Michael C. Oberdorf, USN
Commander, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Remarks

Michael Bracey
Son of Paul George Bracey, USN
Steward Third Class
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

The United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps (Sea Cadets)

The young men and women in uniform at the registration desk and auditorium entrance are members of the US Naval Sea Cadet Corps (USNSCC) from the Dan Healy Division (Portsmouth/Kittery).

The USNSCC is the Navy's youth development program. Sea Cadets are young men and women aged 10 to 18. They are supported by the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard and train on naval bases and other military installations. Sea Cadets wear uniforms, work as teams in a disciplined environment, and adhere to the core values of honor, respect, commitment, and service.

Sea Cadets gain unique and valuable experiences that incorporate hands on learning and teamwork. Their diverse program includes seamanship, sailing, aviation, security, building robots, medical, STEM, SCUBA, submarines, photography, culinary, special forces training and an International Exchange Program.



Memorial Service Funding

The Annual USS Thresher Memorial Service is funded through the generous contributions of supportive donors. Contributions can be made in numerous forms: direct gifts, In Memory of/In Lieu of Flowers, and planned giving.

For more information contact
Kevin Galeaz
Chairman

Annual USS Thresher Memorial Service Planning Committee
USSVI Thresher Base
ThresherBase@gmail.com
<https://ThresherBase.org>

On Facebook: Thresher Base United States Submarine Veterans

Photo # NH 97546 USS Thresher (SSN-593), July 1961



438-458 24 July 1961
THRESHER (SSN-593)
UNITED STATES NAVY

Program

Keynote Speaker

CAPT Joseph Meier, USN
Commanding Officer,
Submarine Maintenance Engineering,
Planning and Procurement

Navy Hymn

Lori Arsenault & Debra (Arsenault) Henderson
Daughters of ENCA(SS) Tilmon J. Arsenault
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

Tolling of the Bells

Reader: Roger Retzke, USSVI Thresher Base

Reader: John McArdle, USSVI Thresher Base
Secretary

Reader: Scott McCord, USS Thresher Family Coordinator
Son of MM1 (SS) Donald J. McCord, USS Thresher (SSN 593)

Belltoller: Rich Suttter, USSVI Thresher Base Commander

Bagpipers: Pat Boyle & Dave McLean

Benediction

LT Nathanael Gentilhomme
Chaplain, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Program

Wreath Laying Ceremony

at the water's edge

Prayer

LT Nathanael Gentilhomme
Chaplain, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Gun Salute

NH Marine Corps League Honor Detail

Wreath Layers

Family of Julius Francis Marullo, Jr., QM1(SS)
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

Deborah Woodman - Wife
Julius Francis Marullo III - Son
Marcye Philbrook - Daughter
Glen Philbrook - Son-in-Law
Benjamin Philbrook - Grandson
Jufen Rui - Granddaughter-in-Law

Taps

Karen McCarthy

Amazing Grace

Pipers Patrick Boyle & Dave McLean

Deb Henderson

**Daughter of ENCA(SS) Tilmon J. Arsenault
USS Thresher (SSN 593)**

Deb (Arsenault) Henderson is the twin daughter of Tilmon J. Arsenault, Chief Engineman USS Thresher (SSN 593).

Deb has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, has worked in the Government Contracting industry for the last 21 years and is currently employed as a Financial Manager for Patrona Corporation in Dover, NH.

Deb's musical talent is shared as an active member and Worship Leader at Redemption Church in Portsmouth. She and her husband enjoy riding their Harley motorcycles and RV'ing.

Deb resides in Stratham, NH with husband Rick. She has a daughter that is a Marine Biologist and a son that is an Audio Engineer. Completing their family, Rick's daughter and family live in Minnesota.

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/debrahenderson>



Lori Arsenault
Daughter of ENCA(SS) Tilmon J. Arsenault
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

Lori Arsenault is the third of five children of Tilmon Joseph Arsenault (1926-1963), Chief Engineman, USS Thresher (SSN 593). She grew up in New Hampshire with her mother Hilda Mary (Jill) Arsenault Robinson, step-father Theodore Robinson, brother Bill, and sisters Marie, Deb, and Donna.

A 1999 graduate of the University of Southern Maine, Lori holds a Bachelor of Music in Performance (Classical Guitar), and was the winner of the 1995 Downeast Classical Guitar Society Competition, Collegiate Division. She recently completed her Master's in Leadership Studies in 2022.

Now retired, Lori was employed by the University from 2003 to 2011, serving as administrative manager for the dean of the School of Applied Science, Engineering, and Technology, and from 2011 to 2020 as the operations and events manager for the School of Music. She continues her work as the coordinator of the five Summer Youth Music and Theatre Camps at the University of Southern Maine.

She is also employed as a music director at Catholic Churches in Portland and Westbrook, Maine, and freelances in music and other creative services for musicians and organizations.

As a volunteer, Lori is currently the editor of the non-profit newspaper, the Gorham Times; bassist/vocalist for the non-profit big band, Saco River Jazz, and volunteers her digital media skills to her local FIRST Robotics affiliates including Team 172, Pine Tree District Event, and Robotics Institute of Maine. She was formerly on the board of directors of the Regional Transportation Program (RTP) of Portland, and the governance committee of the Community Partnerships for Protecting Children of Greater Portland.

She enjoys playing music like her father, drawing, painting and roller skating like her mother, photography and design, refinishing wooden furniture, and learning new things. She has two sons residing close to her home in Gorham, Maine, Sean and Dale Edwards.

In Memorium
Family Speaker and Wreath Layer



Paul George Bracey, USN
Steward Third Class
USS Thresher (SSN 593)



Julius Francis Marullo, Jr., USN
Quartermaster First Class
USS Thresher (SSN 593)

Mr. Gary Hildreth
Former Commander, USSVI Thresher Base

A native of Schenectady, NY, Gary Hildreth enlisted under the Navy's Delayed Entry Program in September 1975. He completed Basic Training in May 1976 and went on to attend Basic Submarine School and Sonar Technician "A" and "C" Schools. In 1982 he completed Instructor Training in Groton, CT. He graduated from the US Navy Senior Enlisted Academy in Newport, R.I. in 1997 and has earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Maryland and Masters Degree in American New England Studies from the University of Southern Maine.

Gary served aboard ballistic missile submarines USS Daniel Boone (SSBN 629), USS Daniel Webster (SSBN 626) and USS George Washington Carver (SSBN 656) completing 14 deterrent patrols. He was "Chief of the Boat" aboard the attack submarines, USS Pintado (SSN 672) and USS Tucson (SSN 770) completing a Western Pacific deployment, three Eastern Pacific deployments and a South American Joint Exercise.

Ashore, Gary served as an Instructor at Submarine School, Groton CT where he earned his designation as Master Training Specialist. Overseas he served as Submarine Group Seven Command Career Counselor, Yokosuka, Japan. Additionally, he has served as Naval Submarine Training Center Pacific Command Master Chief; Submarine Squadron Seven Command Master Chief in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Command Master Chief, in Kittery, Maine.

After serving for nearly 29 years in the submarine force, Gary retired from the Navy in September 2004 and now serves as the Deputy Public Affairs Officer at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

Captain Joseph Meier, USN
Commanding Officer,
Submarine Maintenance Engineering,
Planning and Procurement

CAPT Meier enlisted in the Naval Submarine Service as a Nuclear Machinist's Mate in 1989. Following tours on USS MARIANO G. VALLEJO (SSBN 658(B)) and NPTU Charleston (MTS-635) as a staff instructor, he completed the Nuclear Enlisted Commissioning Program (NECP), earning a B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from Auburn University, Alabama in 2001.

After junior officer tours on the fast attack submarine USS PHILADELPHIA (SSN 690) and as Naval Submarine School Operations Officer, he laterally transferred to the Engineering Duty Officer (EDO) community and obtained Master's Degrees in Mechanical and Naval Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). As an EDO, he completed Repair Officer tours at Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Groton, Connecticut, and TRIDENT Refit Facility, Kings Bay, Georgia. He then served at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard as the Assistant Operations Officer, following 15 months as Deputy Project Superintendent for the USS TEXAS (SSN-775) FY21 Depot Modernization Period. In September of 2022, CAPT Meier became the Commanding Officer of the Submarine Maintenance, Engineering, Planning and Procurement (SUBMEPP) Activity.

CAPT Meier is a Navy Master Training Specialist and is entitled to wear the Navy Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), Navy Commendation Medal, and Navy Achievement Medal (five awards).

Michael Bracey
Son of George Bracey, USN
Steward Third Class

Award-winning Chicago-based photographer Michael Bracey has received rave recognition for his lectures and exhibitions in the United States and abroad. His accomplishments include the CAAAP Portfolio of the Year award (2001), a Chicago Arts Assistant Council grant (2004), a Hutchinson Arts Association Council grant (2004), and the Illinois Arts Council Fellowship (2003) for Africans Within the Americas, a ten-year project of travel to twelve different countries documenting commonalities among people of African descent, which resulted in a traveling exhibition and a book.

Bracey's contributions to *The Journey: The Next 100 Years*, an exhibition and book created and published by the Chicago Alliance of African-American Photographers (CAAAP) in conjunction with Roosevelt University Press, the Chicago History Museum, and the Chicago Tribune, catapulted him into the book publishing world.

Along with Shirley Bradley-LeFlore (St. Louis poet laureate), he co-authored the book, *Rivers of Women* published by 2LeafPress.org. His latest book, *Caras lindas de Colombia* (Beautiful faces of Colombia), is co-authored with Chicago poet, activist, editor and artist Ruth Goring, and is a 2024 award winner with *Winning Writers*, Northampton, MA.

Bracey holds a BA in communications from Webster (College) University, St. Louis, and an MA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Columbia College Chicago.

To read more about Michael Bracey and view other works please visit his website: www.michaelbracey.photography

Captain Michael C. Oberdorf, USN
Commander, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

A native of Penn Run, Pennsylvania, Captain Oberdorf enlisted in the Navy in 1992 and received his commission in 1999 from Penn State University through the Enlisted Commissioning Program. He has served in a variety of assignments both afloat and ashore throughout his career as a Submarine and Engineering Duty Officer. His sea tours include USS BOXER (LHD 4), USS LOUISIANA (SSBN 743G), USS NORTH CAROLINA (SSN 777), USS LA JOLLA (SSN 701) as Executive Officer and USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN 76) as Chief Engineer from June 2017 to August 2019.

Ashore, Captain Oberdorf served at Commander U.S. Second Fleet as a Navy Planner and coordinated the HADR response to Haiti in 2010. He also served at U.S. Fleet Forces Command as the Deputy Operations Officer from 2012-2014 where he laterally transferred to the Engineering Duty Officer Community because of medical reasons after screening for Submarine command. He completed his EDO qualification tour in ten months at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) working on USS GEORGE H. W. BUSH (CVN 77) and USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN 75) as Deputy Project Superintendent.

He was then assigned as the Norfolk Submarine Repair Officer in charge of all intermediate level maintenance on the waterfront. Next, he was assigned as Deputy Operations Officer for NNSY where he served until April 2017. Following his sea tour onboard USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN 76), he reported to NNSY and relieved as the Business and Strategic Planning Officer, from August 2019 to January 2020 and then served as the Production Resources Officer, from January 2020 to August 2020.

He was previously assigned as the Operations Officer at NNSY before assuming command of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard on February 4, 2022. Captain Oberdorf is a 1999 graduate of Penn State University with a BS degree and he holds a MSEE from the Naval Post Graduate School. His personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (four awards), and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (three awards).

Ship's Company

ENCA(SS) Tilmon J. Arsenault
LTJG Ronald C. Babcock
EN2(SS) Ronald E. Bain
MM1 John E. Bell
EM2(SS) Edgar S. Bobbitt
EM3(SS) Gerald C. Boster
SD3(SS) George Bracey
EN2(SS) Richard P. Brann
EN2(SS) Richard J. Carkoski
SK2 Patrick W. Carmody
TM2(SS) Steven G. Cayey
SN(SS) Edward Christiansen
EM2(SS) Larry W. Claussen
ETR3(SS) Thomas E. Clements
LT Merrill F. Collier
SOS2(SS) Francis M. Cummings
ETN2(SS) Samuel J. Dabruzzo
ETR3(SS) Clyde E. Davison III
EN3(SS) Donald C. Day
EM1(SS) Roy O. Denny Jr.
LCDR Michael J. Di Nola
SN Peter J. Dibella
ETN2(SS) Don R. Dundas
ET1(SS) Troy E. Dyer
SOCA(SS) Ellwood H. Forni
ET1(SS) Raymond P. Foti
FTM2(SS) Larry W. Freeman
EM2(SS) Gregory J. Fusco
HMC(SS) Andrew J. Gallant Jr.
SD1(SS) Napoleon T. Garcia
YNSN(SS) John E. Garner
LCDR Pat M. Garner
EN2(SS) Robert W. Gaynor
SA(SS) Robert W. Gosnell
LTJG John G. Grafton
SOC(SS) William E. Graham
QM1(SS) Aaron J. Gunter
ETR2(SS) Richard C. Hall

LCDR John W. Harvey
(Commanding Officer of Thresher)
EM1 Norman T. Hayes
MM1 Laird G. Heiser
MM2 Marvin T. Helsius
LTJG James J. Henry Jr.
EMCA(SS) Leonard H. Hewitt
TM2(SS) Joseph H. Hoague
EM2 James P. Hodge
EN2(SS) John F. Hudson
FN John P. Inglis
FTG1(SS) Brawner G. Johnson
ENCA(SS) Edward A. Johnson
RMSA Richard L. Johnson
TMC(SS) Robert E. Johnson
ET1(SS) Thomas B. Johnson
EM2(SS) Richard W. Jones
SOS2(SS) Edmund J. Kaluza Jr.
ETR2(SS) Thomas C. Kantz
MM3 Robert D. Kearney
IC2 (SS) Ronald D. Keiler
MM2(SS) George J. Kiesecker
EN1(SS) Billy M. Klier
CS3 George R. Kroner
QM1(SS) Norman G. Lanouette
YN1(SS) Wayne W. Lavoie
LCDR John S. Lyman Jr.
EN2(SS) Templeton N. Mabry Jr.
LTJG Frank J. Malinski
IC2(SS) Richard H. Mann Jr.
QM1(SS) Julius F. Marullo Jr.
EM2(SS) Douglas R. McClelland
MM1(SS) Donald J. McCord
TM3(SS) Karl P. McDonough
MM1(SS) Sidney L. Middleton
CS2 Ronald A. Muise

ETN2(SS) James A. Musselwhite
CS1(SS) Donald E. Nault
RMC(SS) Walter J. Noonis
ET1(SS) John D. Norris
EM2 Chesley C. Oetting
LTJG Guy C. Parsons Jr.
EMCA(SS) Roscoe C. Pennington
EMCS James G. Peters
SOS2(SS) James F. Phillippi
EN2(SS) Dan A. Philput
MM2 Richard Podwell
MM1(SS) John S. Regan
RM2 James P. Ritchie
SN Pervis Robison Jr.
QM2(SS) Glenn A. Rountree
ETN2 Anthony A. Rushetski
EM1(SS) James M. Schiewe
EMCM(SS) Benjamin N. Shafer
EMCS(S) John D. Shafer
MM1 Joseph T. Shimko
ETRSN Burnett M. Shotwell
FTG2(SS) Alan D. Sinnet
LT John Smarz Jr.
BT1 William H. Smith Jr.
MM1 James L. Snider
EM1 Ronald H. Solomon
SO1(SS) Robert E. Steinel
IC1(SS) Roger E. Van Pelt
RM1(SS) Joseph A. Walski
RMSN David A. Wasel
FTG1(SS) Charles L. Wiggins
LTJG John J. Wiley
MMCA(SS) Donald E. Wise
QMSN(SS) Ronald E. Wolfe
EM2 Jay H. Zweifel

**Submarine Force
U.S. Atlantic Fleet**
LCDR Robert L. Krag

The Sperry Corporation
Kenneth R. Corcoran
Donald W. Kuester
Donald T. Stadtmuller

Raytheon Corporation
Maurice F. Jaquay

**Portsmouth
Naval Shipyard**
Fred P. Abrams
LCDR Philip H. Allen
Daniel W. Beal Jr.
LCDR Robert D. Biederman
LCDR John H. Billings
Robert E. Charron
Kenneth J. Critchley
Paul C. Currier
Richard R. Des Jardins
George J. Dineen
Richard K. Fisher
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