

THE ROOSTER TAIL

SAVE THE PT BOAT, INC.
(A Non-Profit 501(c)(3) Organization)
P.O. Box 13422
Portland, OR 97213
Web: www.savetheptboatinc.com
Email: ptboat658@gmail.com

Volume 6, Issue 2
November, 2014

New Home and New Hull



PT 658 at 35+ knots October 9, 2014 on the Columbia River

**Officers: President Bob Alton, Vice President Ron Taylor, Secretary Molly McCready, Treasurer Dick Sleeter
Editors Jerry Gilmartin and Molly McCready**

Message from our President

To the Supporters of PT-658

Well, it appears that we're starting a new phase. The boat's new location at the Vigor Industrial Shipyard is about ½ mile South of our old moorage at the Navy base pier. We have spent the last 6 months making various improvements to our new home with the addition of a safety barrier fence around the pier, a locked gate, and adding a boat house alarm system. Also, with the exception of some painting, the new entrance is complete, making it much safer to access the boathouse for our visitors and volunteers.

Thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, the building has been completely changed for the better.

Additionally, we have continued to improve the boat with several recent acquisitions, including ski pole IFF antennas, authentic replica triggers on the 50 cal. machine guns, and adding a 60mm mortar to the bow.

After talking about it for 9 years, we finally had visitors come via Willamette Jet Boats to see the boat and have dinner. We did a lot of work to set this up but unfortunately had only 4 evenings with customers. We will be working with Andy Moos of Willamette Jet Boats to help make it more successful next summer.

We've also learned a lot about being an "Uninspected Passenger Vessel" or "12 pack Certification" in Coast Guard terms. The main things the USCG required of us was to establish a drug testing program for all our crew members, and have our Skippers obtain a 150 Ton Master's License.

Other positive developments include our new Corporate Sponsorship Program and Donor Recognition. We have also identified a path forward leading to building a first rate PT museum and relocating our operations to a place that would increase public awareness and visibility in the metro Portland area. Several new volunteers have recently joined thus helping to ensure our project stays alive and moves forward. Thanks again to all the volunteers for your countless hours of dedicated work!

Bob Alton, President, Save the PT boat

RESTORATION UPDATES

Completion of Hull Repair

Almost the entire year from Sept 2012 until Sept 2013 was taken up in repairing the rotted parts of the hull. We commissioned an extensive Marine Survey to identify all the locations of hull rot and structural weaknesses. In response to this survey, we embarked upon a multi-month repair mission! These repairs encompassed all frames aft of the engine room bulkhead, the starboard shaft log replacement, and removal/repair of rotten planks on both sides of the bow all the way back to the wardroom. As we dug into these initial repairs, we found even more spot repairs were needed. We hired a professional shipwright, Jim Lyons, from the Port Townsend Shipwright Cooperative, to oversee repairs and instruct the volunteers in proper methods and techniques. Because of our state of disrepair, we attended the 2013 Portland Rose Festival Fleet week with the boat and cradle on the barge! Volunteer Ron Taylor was the repair work supervisor and unofficial scribe for the project, and sent out weekly detailed reports of our progress. Ron's weekly yarns of our deeds and misdeeds became a source of much hilarity and inspiration. In the middle of this massive repair project, we were blindsided by the Navy's requirement that we leave the base. After an appeal we were granted a 3 month extension to finish repairs. After a final tally was done, including countless volunteer hours, we had to spend almost \$225,000 to complete this project. This was money well spent, although we lost a season of promotional event revenue. Many thanks go out to all of the volunteers and donors who made this project



Jim Lyons & Ron Taylor "PT Boat Shipwrights" standing on new shaft log and frames in aft tank room

possible. The new hull is working great! As Ron says, it's all about the paint!

A New Home!

PT658 has relocated from the Navy Reserve Center to the Vigor Industrial Shipyard

About 1-1/2 years ago, after mooring PT658 at the US Navy Operational Support Center, Swan Island for over 20 years at no cost, our group was informed that we must either move off the base or pay rent per the going commercial rate by Jan 2013. Our group held negotiations with the Naval Bureaucracy in Everett, Washington and were granted a grace period of 9 months to relocate. The reasoning for their requirement to move was from adherence to "Fairness Doctrines" that stated "No Non-Government Organization (NGO) could be treated any differently than any other NGO." Our group would have to meet the same strict guidelines as any other private business renting space on the base. Our standing as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and National Historic Register Vessel did not affect the decision to treat us any differently, despite the fact that we are preserving their own heritage by restoring an Historic Naval Vessel. One difficulty that had to be overcome was our status of having the hull repairs in progress.

The boat was on the cradle, with much of the hull removed and being replaced. Alan Sprott, Vice President of the Vigor Industrial Shipyard, located just across the Swan Island Lagoon from the base, was contacted and graciously came to our rescue by offering us moorage at a substantially reduced rate.

Last September, 2013 was the big moving day! In addition to moving the boat and boathouse, we also were tasked with demolishing the pier workshop built by our original PT boat veterans back in 1994, removing our considerable collection of equipment and museum artifacts from several outbuildings on the base, and moving our various support barges needed for PT Boat operations.

One of our volunteers, Captain Clark Caffal of Combined Forestry and Marine Services, Inc. enabled this herculean task with his tugboat Ramona III. Clark moved our boathouse, staging barge and cradle barge to the new location. We are now located at Pier 307, Vigor Industrial Shipyard, accessible via locked Gate 18 across from Peterbilt DSU at 5555 N. Lagoon Ave, on Swan Island. We are extremely pleased to be in our new home!



Clark Caffal in tug Ramona III pushing empty boathouse to new moorage

Save the PT Boat, Inc. announces new Corporate Champions Program!

The **Corporate Champions Program** is an exciting new way for corporate leaders and individuals to partner with PT 658. By making an annual donation beginning at \$5,000, corporate leaders can take an active role in preserving this historic naval vessel, help to underwrite educational programs for visitors and kids, and insure that our WW II Veterans and their families can have the experience of riding on the boat. By supporting the restoration and preservation of PT 658 and our outreach programs, corporations can enjoy rides with friends, families, employees and clients, and gain significant exposure and recognition.

This program was developed with the vision and leadership of our late friend and Board Vice President Chuck Kellogg. A key priority of Chuck's vision was to insure that we continue to serve our nation's Veterans, and make the boat available to them for rides and tours.

Contributions will be put to good use to assure that PT 658 continues its service to our Veterans, and embraces its new mission—to educate future generations regarding the essential role of PT Boats in securing our nation's freedom during WW II. For more information, please contact Bob Alton, STPTB Inc. Board President, rcalton@comcast.net or 503-209-8203.

New Boathouse Ramp Project

After settling into our new location, we noticed that some of our visitors were having difficulty getting to and from the boat, down several ladders. We decided to take action to improve this situation since most of our WW2 vets and visitors would benefit from having easier access. In-house talent was utilized to design a new ramp system to bridge this gap. The entire crew chipped in to construct the ramps, both inside and out of the boathouse. A significant amount of beautiful clear quarter sawn cedar wood was donated by Dick Lowe's nephew, Jim Girt, to be used on the construction. Mark Wolf also volunteered to build a Memorial Planter Bench dedicated to Dick Lowe installed on the porch. Now, visitors can walk on ramps all the way from the pier to the deck of the boat. Cheers to a job well done by the whole crew! The Bench is pretty comfy too!



Dick Lowes Memorial Planter Bench installed at top of outer ramp made by Mark Wolf



Interior ramp designed by Bob Alton, built by the volunteer crew. Note how ramp ends at boat deck level.

Stove Repair

After the galley stove had stopped working, it was in dire need of repair, and the opportunity to match the builders photos presented itself. Now the stove appears as it was supposed to look instead of a modern day substitute.



PT631 Builders photo shows galley stove



Newly rebuilt PT658 stove a close match!

“Hot, Straight and True” Book will be Returning Soon!

By Molly McCready PT Boat Splinter

This is a wonderful book by Russell E. Hamachek, PT Boat veteran and founding member of Save the PT Boat, Inc. During WWII, Russ served in New Guinea as a PT Boat Captain (PT150) and later in the Philippines as Commander of Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron 39.

Russ and his wife, Margaret "Muggsie" Hamachek to whom the book is dedicated, have generously donated many copies for us to sell and raise money at our concession booths, and later in our Ship's Store, set up for online shopping by our intrepid web master, Wally Boerger. Not only is this a delightful, well-written book, but it embodies PT boaters true spirit of teamwork, dedication and hi-jinx, filled with fascinating and often hilarious stories from the PT veterans themselves. This is the second edition which happily includes, of particular interest, an anecdote by my father, Al McCready. This was the time he and another partner in crime from the 491 boat, "borrowed" a train to cross the island of Panay, in the Philippines - claiming they were with "Naval Intelligence!" Of particular note is an accompanying photo of my young, handsome father at the helm of PT490 of Squadron 33, ferrying a prominent passenger standing behind him, General Douglas MacArthur. This has been proclaimed to be one-of-a-kind - perhaps the only one of MacArthur in the background of any photo!

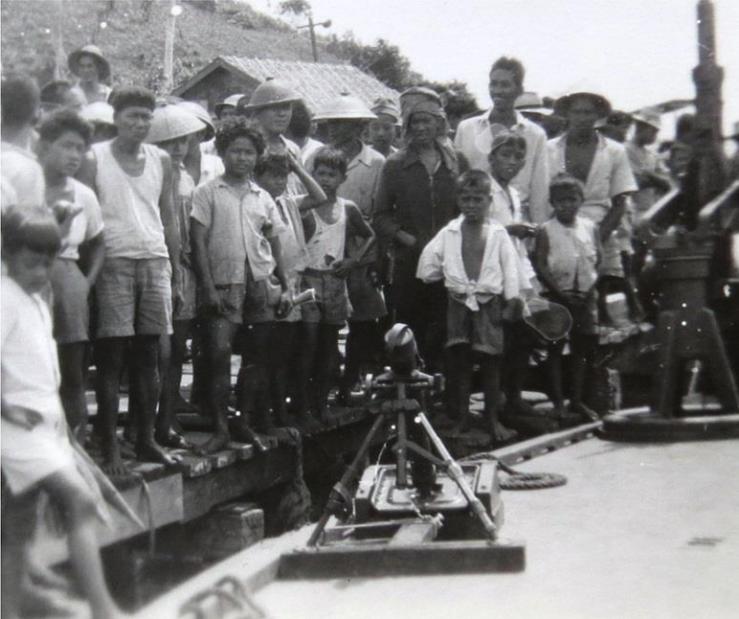
Now with Russ's passing, we have finally run out of copies and have had many requests for more. Therefore I approached the delightful Muggsie and asked if we could have the title and publication rights in Russ's memory to print more - and she graciously agreed and signed them over. Wally is currently having some test copies made to insure quality, and we hope to have a new supply of these incredible books soon. Thank you so very much, Muggsie!

HERE COME THE HOLIDAYS!

Make sure to check out the updated Ships Store on our website, www.savetheptboatinc.com We have added lots of wonderful PT boat goodies and new items just in time for your Christmas Gift shopping! We accept Checks, Visa and PayPal on the website. Every dollar we make goes back into the boat! We would really appreciate your financial support even more now, since we now must pay dearly for monthly moorage and parking fees as well as electricity and other expenses.

PT boat obtains new replica 60mm mortar!

After many years of searching, we finally obtained an authentic 60mm M2 Mortar. Thanks to the tireless efforts and donations by Russell Whipple, Rick Larson, John Gillon, Wally Boerger and Jim Mitchell, we were able to assemble all the parts and mount it on the bow of the boat. Inspired by the mortar mount aboard PT vet Obie William's PT334, Jim Mitchell built a replica mount for use in displaying the mortar.



Obie William's PT334 in Basilan shows bow mortar



Our new mortar mounted in same location

Authentic IFF antennas now installed

Part of the factory electronic equipment original to the boat, were the antennas for the Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) transponders. They worked together with the radar to detect enemy aircraft before they could attack. Rich Pekelney, volunteer on the **USS Pampanito** WW2 submarine museum in San Francisco, and HNSA Webmaster, knew that we were looking for IFF antennas when he came across one owned by his friend, James Cline of Berkeley Ca. James, a metal artist, had used the antenna as part of a sculpture at the "Burning Man Festival" of 2011. After learning that it belonged on board a WW2 PT Boat, James donated it to us in order to put the antenna back to its original use. Then, one day in the mail, the antenna showed up on our doorstep! Chuck Kellogg and Tom Cates volunteered to make and install a companion antenna and mounting brackets for both. They were mounted in their original locations atop the charthouse and radar mast. The new antennas look great and give the boat that authentic silhouette from when she was delivered to the Navy in 1945! Now, visitors have their interests peaked when they see these unusual antennae on the boat, and end up learning a little known facet of WW2 history in the bargain. Thanks to James and Rich for making it possible!



New antennas on PT658 in 2014



PT631 at factory shows IFF antenna in 1944

New 50 caliber machine gun trigger assemblies are installed!

In late 2011, Don Shannon, Curator of the *PT Boat Museum* of Fall River MA, told us that trigger assemblies for our dual .50 cal Mk9 Cradles were available through one of his contacts on the East coast. Our volunteer, Bill Weaver made arrangements to obtain these replicas for use aboard the boat. Authorization to purchase the triggers was given by the Board, and the triggers showed up needing installation and significant changes to fit on our homemade gun cradles. At this point, crewman (and ex-Gunners Mate) Bob Cravens stepped up to complete the job. He spent over 80 hours working with a local machinist, Stan Vangrunsven to modify and assemble both sets of trigger assemblies onto our guns. Now, they work like the originals, and when visitors ask how to shoot the MGs, we can demonstrate how they look and functioned in real life. Thanks to Bob and Bill for making this possible! It is just one more little detail that adds to the overall authentic feel of PT658!



Bob Cravens, Dave Mackay and Paul Hansen admire newly installed trigger assemblies on Port 50 cal



2 Sets of Trigger Parts before assembly

The PT658 obtains National Register Designation and mounts bronze Plaque onto Charthouse

After 3 years of concerted efforts by our crew, on Sept 4, 2012, the National Park Service added our boat to the National Register of Historic Places. This makes us eligible for future Historic Preservation Grants. Seeing the need for a visible indication of our newfound status, Chuck Kellogg suggested we have a bronze plaque made for display on board the boat. Barbara Brunkow, Dick Sleeter and others were instrumental in selecting the design and casting of the new plaque. It was mounted on the starboard side of the charthouse, just aft of the radio antenna. See more about the National Historic Register designation and its significance on their website at :

http://www.nps.gov/nr/feature/weekly_features/12_09_14_PT-658.htm



Fred Juras, Chuck Kellogg and Bob Alton mounting new Plaque

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Tom Cates

Tom has been one of the most energetic individuals working on the boat over the last 15 years. One of our 3 engines is named for Tom, because he is always down in the engine room performing whatever job needs to be accomplished. The list of Toms' (aka MacGyver) contributions are too numerous to list here, but he usually has his hands on whatever the most important project is at the moment! His talents range from mechanical engine work to installing the Fire Alarm System, Electrical wiring, and even woodworking on the hull repairs. If we could only have about 3 more people like Tom, we could do anything we need to! Thank You, Tom for being the dedicated, dependable and hard-working Volunteer that you are!



Tom Cates ponders engine projects

Ron Taylor

Ron has become one of our most well liked and talented volunteers. Ron, a retired house painter, has quickly adapted to working on the world's only remaining operational PT Boat. He used his talents to paint the PT658 in her new camo measure 31-20L to replicate the "as-delivered" look of the boat. Ron's unique skills came to light during the major hull repairs. We needed someone to take charge and oversee the repairs and meet daily with the crew, and Ron stepped up to do a fantastic job! He even sent out impromptu weekly email status updates over the entire repair period. Ron's infectious spirit and "can-do" attitude kept the crew in a great mood despite the overwhelming work load needed to complete the massive undertaking. Ron is a jack of all trades and is a welcome addition to the crew. He plays a pretty mean banjo too!



Ron Taylor with Channel 8 TV Cameraman



Torpedo and WW2 Jeep as seen at Lake Oswego Boat Festival after photo editing by pranksters

Joke of the Quarter: Restful Sleep

By the time a sailor pulled into a little town every hotel room was taken. "You've got to have a room somewhere," he pleaded. "Or just a bed, I don't care where."

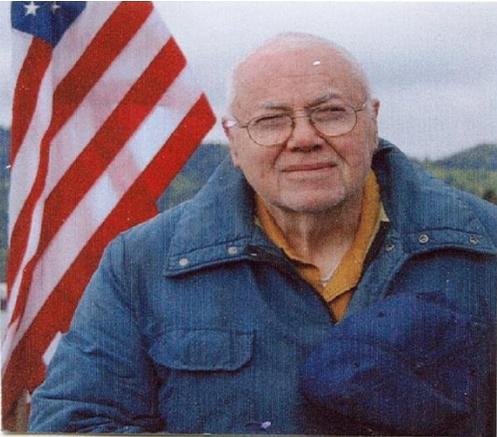
"Well, I do have a double room with one occupant - an Air Force guy," admitted the manager, "and he might be glad to split the cost. But to tell you the truth, he snores so loudly that people in adjoining rooms have complained in the past. I'm not sure it'd be worth it to you."

"No problem," the tired Navy man assured him. "I'll take it." The next morning, the sailor came down to breakfast bright-eyed and bushy tailed. "How'd you sleep?" asked the manager. "Never better." The manager was impressed. "No problem with the other guy snoring?" "Nope. I shut him up in no time," said the Navy guy. "How'd you manage that?" asked the manager.

"He was already in bed, snoring away, when I came in the room," the sailor explained. "I went over, gave him a kiss on the cheek, and said, 'Goodnight beautiful!'...and he sat up all night watching me."

In Memoriam

Don Brandt



Don at Navy Pier working on the boat



Don's PT253 of RON20

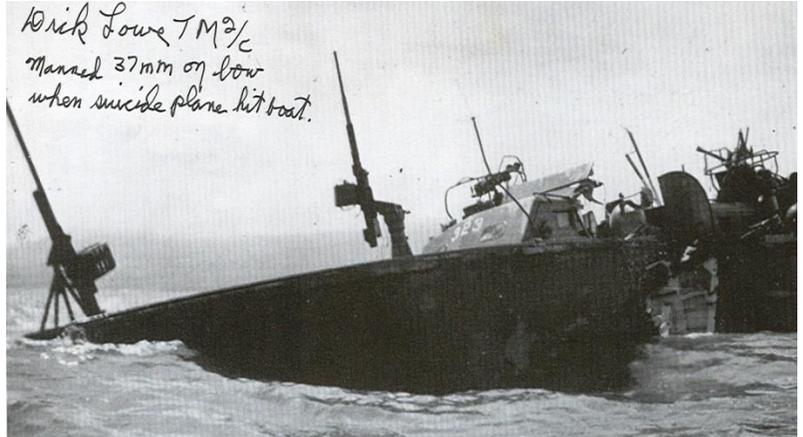
Don Brandt

Autobiography from "Knights of the Sea"

DONALD H. BRANDT, MoMM 3/C, Ron 20. Joined the Navy in March 1944 at Tacoma, WA. Finished high school, reported to NTC Farragut, ID June 8, 1944. After boot camp I was sent to Shoemaker, CA for assignment. Boarded troop ship at San Francisco Oct. 1944, arrived at New Guinea Nov. Two weeks later arrived at Treasury in the Solomon Islands. MTB Ron 20. That was the first time I had heard of or seen a PT Boat. Real exciting for an 18 year old kid. I was assigned to the engine room for training on boat #?. Later I was assigned to the 253 boat. In Dec. the squadron headed for the Philippines, Palawan and Mindoro. May 1945 I was transferred to base force and assigned to the generator repair shop. When Ron 20 was decommissioned in Nov. 1945 I was reassigned to a floating drydock off Samar. April 1946 the drydock was towed to Midway Island, from Midway by plane to Hawaii, boat to San Francisco, train to Bremerton, WA for discharge, Jun. 8, 1946. After 10 years of many jobs I got a job with United Air Lines. Have been with them nearly 26 years as a building and maintenance mechanic and painter. Married to Barbara 28 years, have daughter and son. Live in Boring, OR, 20 miles southeast of Portland.

Longtime Crewman Don Brandt took his last patrol in the springtime of 2014. He will be missed greatly!

Dick Lowe



PT323 of RON21 after Kamikaze attack off Leyte Dec 10 1944



Dick on PT658

Dick Lowe

WW2 PT Boat Veteran of the Save the PT Boat Inc., Dick Lowe took his last patrol on April 9, 2014, aged 89 years. Dick had been doing the job of Treasurer for around 20 years, which included such tasks as: counting and depositing funds, keeping an updated list of Donors, visiting the Post Office and Bank several times a week, writing Thank You letters, collecting receipts from volunteers Mondays and Thursdays, and writing reimbursement checks. He also generated a monthly financial report for the Board of Directors and Prepared the Income Taxes for our group. He did these tasks even after he could no longer drive and had to be chauffeured. To replace what Dick was doing single handedly, our group now needs 5 people. Dick's wartime experience was a Torpedoman aboard PT323 of RON21. He was aboard the boat during the invasion of the Philippine Islands and saw combat during the Battle of Surigao Straights and the Landings at Leyte, Ormoc Bay. Coincidentally, 3 other STPTB vets were also present at Surigao Straights out of 39 PT Boat crews, all unknown to each other at the time! They included, Al McCready PT491, Rolf Bruckner PT127 and Jim Brunnette PT131. Dick's life was changed forever by the events occurring on Dec 10, 1944. While patrolling off the coast of Leyte, his boat, PT323 was hit and cut in half by a Japanese Kamikaze airplane. Dick was manning the bow 37mm gun at the time, and was catapulted up 40 feet only to land safely in the ocean and rescued by a fellow crewman. He was awarded the Purple Heart for this action. See the story about the Bench made in his honor on page 4.

Bill Skade

We all took much pleasure in working with longtime contributor and supporter, William "Bill" Skade of Eugene, OR and his whole family. You may remember the story from the last newsletter about PT658 celebrating the 90th birthday of LT Bill Skade, who was the XO and plank owner of Higgins PT625 RON43 at her 1944 commissioning, and subsequently transferred to the Western Pacific, where he was CO of Elco PT143 RON8 in Borneo and Samar. In Dec of 2013, Bill "took his last patrol". Bill is survived by his wife Gloria and daughter Patty. They all have been very generous in helping the boat get to her current condition, and we want to give them all heartfelt thanks. Fair Winds and Following Seas, Bill!



Bill at the wheel of PT143 in 1945



Skade Family in crews quarters, Bill 3rd from Right

Chuck Kellogg

Sadly we recently lost our beloved friend and benefactor, Chuck Kellogg, in a tragic accident. We will miss him greatly as he was our PT 658 Vice President, Skipper, generous donor and tireless advocate. Some people are just more alive than others, and he was that, with his marvelous story-telling, keen sense of humor, altruism and classy diplomatic skills. Chuck loved Naval History and respected and admired WWII veterans. Although Chuck served in the Army during the Korean War, he was truly an honorary naval serviceman and was buried in Willamette National Cemetery in Portland with a full Naval Honors and a record turn-out of friends and admirers.

Chuck absolutely loved life to the fullest and was passionate about restoring historic wooden boats, of which he owned several. At the time of his death, he held a US Coast Guard Merchant Master 100-ton Captain's license and was pursuing his Master 200-ton Captain's license as well. In addition, he was in the process of re-certifying his license to fly aircraft and helicopters, as well as finding time to be an avid fisherman, wood-carver, and prolific gardener.

Chuck was on the board of the Oregon Maritime Museum, and founded the Columbia-Willamette chapter of the Antique Boat Society and the Maritime Heritage Coalition. He also worked tirelessly for 14 months with the Port of Portland and the Dept. of State Lands to move the WWII Landing Craft, USS LCI 713, to the Swan Island Lagoon - where it is now moored adjacent to PT 658. At the time of his death, he was planning a celebration party to honor this event.

Jokingly, he used to say, referring to the vibrant fellow in the Dos Equis beer commercial, that he, too, would like to be remembered as: "*the most interesting man in the world!*" There's no doubt you've earned that title, Chuck, and we might also add, "*the most irreplaceable man in the world!*"



With wife Trish in July 2014



With Daughter Carly at Helm in 2010

HAPPY BIRTHDAY PT BOAT STYLE!



Bob Jackson and his crew of PT181 pose in 1944, censor blacked out the number on chart house



Jackson Clan assumes similar pose, Bob (dark glasses) sits in front center for his 90th birthday trip

June 28th 2014 Bob Jackson turns 90 years old.

In June of this year, we were approached by the family of WW2 PT Boat veteran and longtime supporter of the boat, Bob Jackson. Bob saw action during WW2 on PT181 RON11. He and his extended family showed up on the morning of June 28th and were given the star treatment. They had a tour of the newly restored PT658 and then were taken on a 1 hour excursion on the Willamette River. Bob and the entire crew were each given a turn at the wheel, guiding the PT658 on her way patrolling the Willamette River. After the trip, we were all treated to a delicious birthday cake, (Bobs' favorite, carrot cake with cream cheese frosting!) and he was presented a memento from the crew of the boat. To top things off, we staged a re-enactment of a crew photo of Bobs Boat PT181, using helmets and small arms to replicate the poses of the PT181 crew in the original photo. Bob hasn't changed a bit! Thanks again and Happy 90th Bob!

THE BASE REPORT BY FRANK J. ANDRUSS, SR.

Being as this is my first column for the Save the PT Boat group, I had wondered what I could talk about. This should be a no brainer as my life is pretty much consumed by my grandchildren and PT boats, but for this column, I think we shall keep it strictly about the boats. For many of you that read this Newsletter, you will no doubt have some knowledge about the role of the PT boats during WWII. For others, I hope to give you some insight as to these wonderful wooden boats.

They were shallow draft whippets, capable of maximum torpedo power. The US Navy really was not that interested in these boats early on, as they were more concerned with the striking power of capital ships. It was realized that a craft capable of operating in shallow waters was needed, but the Navy had nothing in its arsenal. It was the British that were experimenting with these small fast boats as early as 1905, with a 15 foot torpedo boat. This boat carried two torpedoes with a speed of 25 knots. Another British boat builder, John I. Thornycroft, produced a much larger boat, 40 foot overall, with a displacement of 4.5 tons. This boat had a top speed of 18 knots and carried a single torpedo in a rack. Other countries followed, as the Italians made a boat in 1906. By 1907 the French would build a steel hulled boat, which at eight tons was pretty heavy, and it carried only one torpedo built into the hull.

The British and the Italians led the field in motor torpedo boat development in WWI, with the Italians developing their MAS boats in 1916. These boats were 50 to 69 feet long, carrying two to four torpedoes and a top speed of 33 knots. The first of the British Coastal Motor Boats (CMB) were built by Thornycroft in 1915. These 40 foot boats were capable of speeds in excess of 33 knots. Later these boats would be increased to 55 feet, and were not only used for torpedo attacks, but for mine-laying, smokescreens, anti-submarine duty, and rescue of downed pilots. In the next Base Report, we will talk about America's interest in these small Torpedo Boats.



Frank mans WW2 Battle Station (Port 50) while son Matt looks on



Save the PT Boat Volunteer Crew

Generations Connected (by Frank Lesage)

It's tempting to reminisce and reflect upon the exploits of WWII PT Boats and their young crews. Now, however, tribute must be served to the next generation of volunteers who have restored the hulk us old vets inherited to become the finest authentic and operational PT Boat this side of Eden.

It seems they instinctively captured the can-do spirit of the original crews who manned those swift wooden expendables. They braved inclement weather, unforeseen setbacks, shortage of funds, recalcitrant politicians and many other annoyances. Without breaking stride, they forged together their various talents and skills, and particularly their unwavering dedication to the restoration of PT658.

When we observe students and folks, from all over this nation, visit PT658 and express how much they have enjoyed the experience of learning about another sector of WWII, we know the volunteers' hard work and dedication has paid off.

The few of us doddering PT Boat vets remaining offer our profound gratitude and a hearty hand salute to another great generation. We feel comfortable knowing our boat is in good hands. I suspect our mates who have made their last patrol grin each time those mighty Packards rumble into their throaty roar!

NEW! Heritage Center promotional video with Frank Lesage. This is a Must See!

On the Home page of the Save the PT Boat website, www.savetheptboatinc.com , near the bottom of the page, is a link that connects to a video narrated by Frank Lesage about the restoration effort and building of the PT658 Heritage Center and Museum. Watch this outstanding video to get a feeling of WWII action and excitement, continuing with our veteran's story of discovering the deteriorating PT boat in 1992 through its initial restoration; and ending with our future hopes to establish a museum that is in keeping with the finest traditions of naval history. You'll be glad you did!

Important Newsletter Notice:

If you like this newsletter in the Black and White printed Form, you will love the Full-Color High Definition Email Version even more! Please update us with your preference to receive future Newsletters in either email or printed copy, and if you have an email address, please let us know that as well. It is more economical for us to send emails rather than printing 1000's of newsletters, and your money is better spent in restoring the boat. You can also read this Newsletter on our Internet website at www.savetheptboatinc.com. Thanks!

An Angel and PT 658

At first blush, it would seem no self-respecting angel would wish to be identified with WWII PT boaters. It is rumored those boaters had some difficulty sporting halos. Fortunately, our angel elected to ignore those rumors.

About 23 years ago, when the resources of PT 658 were at low tide, and the PT vets were reduced to their wartime activity of begging, borrowing and alleged midnight requisitioning and donating their cash and tools, our angel, the Quest for Truth Foundation, came to our rescue. Bradley F. Henke, President of the foundation, had just completed a visit to the Astoria Maritime Museum. He found one of our brochures, conducted a complete research on Save the PT Boat, Inc. and recommended the Foundation donate \$10,000 to us. Well, it could not have occurred at a more opportune time. The donation was most appreciated; but, what was most impressive was their belief and faith in our ability to complete the restoration of PT 658.

The Foundation was established by James G. Scripps, a former WWII destroyer escort skipper and member of a prominent newspaper family. It was his wish to support a worthy historical project. An interesting aside to the receipt of our first check was the then Treasurer Dick Lowe's response when he received it. He called me and said, "Frank, I just got a letter with a \$10,000 check from some outfit called "Quest for Truth" Foundation. What should I do with it?" My response was, "Deposit it!" Dick did.

As Secretary at that time, I sent a thank you letter to Bradley Henke. In the ensuing years, I have kept him informed of our progress. Also, over that time, each year we have received a \$10,000 donation. The last two years, they have increased their gift to \$25,000. Unquestionably, it would have been difficult for PT 658 to have completed renovation of the boat without their outstanding financial support and unswerving belief in our goals to recreate an educational WWII historic vessel.

Four years ago, Bradley and his family toured PT 658. He told me he was not only impressed with the progress we were making, but especially by the dedication of the few remaining PT vets and the younger volunteers. As near as we can determine, The Quest for truth Foundation has contributed more than all other foundations combined. Most assuredly, we look forward to visits from Bradley Henke, the Quest for Truth Foundation Board members and their families. When aboard, riding PT 658, we know they will feel and experience the generosity of their "angel." We always will.

Frank Lesage

Update on Oral History Project by Barbara Brunkow

STPTB Inc. has completed the first phase of its Oral and Video History project, with generous grant support provided by the **Jackson Foundation, Autzen Foundation** and **Oregon Cultural Trust**.

This project documents the experiences of local WW II PT Boat Veterans who have rescued and restored PT-658, the only remaining PT Boat in the world that is operational with original Packard V-12 engines.

Eleven WWII PT veterans were interviewed, including Ken Nissen, Maurice Hooper, Pphaen Sayre, Don Brandt, Frank Lesage, Rolf Bruckner, Richard Lowe, Beatty Lay, Bob Dubay, Bud Case, and Joe Derrough. (Mr. Derrough was a PT veteran and friend of Mr. Bruckner's, whose history was captured in order to save the stories of surviving PT veterans and their service during WWII.) Interviews were also captured for long time volunteers Chuck Kellogg, Bob Alton, Jerry Gilmartin, Molly McCready, Wally Boerger and Dale Billups.

A total of 26 hours of tape were filmed and transferred onto digital format. Prior VHS tape interviews from 2002-2004 with several founders of the organization who have since died were also incorporated. Interviews were conducted by Sandy Carter, oral historian and preservationist, and Melody Ashford, videographer. David Danis also volunteered to serve as Project Manager.

These interviews form a permanent educational resource that documents the experiences of local PT Boaters during WW II--they also document the teamwork among veterans and skilled volunteers that has enabled the physical restoration of PT 658 to operational status. The project also created a DVD for presentations to service clubs, schools, senior centers and other groups.

Our next tasks include making available the oral and video histories on the website (www.savetheptboatinc.com), and transcription and development of the materials, plus extant photos, into book form.

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We deeply appreciate the support from the following individuals, foundations and corporations who help significantly to sustain our efforts to restore and preserve PT 658!

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