

USS R E Lee (601) News

Spring 2023

Groton 2022 Recap



We had a greater than expected turnout for this one! Caused a few planning and logistics issues, but that is actually a good thing. It seems we were long overdue for a "back home" visit. It ain't like it use to be,



but it still seems to look and feel the same. The weather was just beginning to chill and the days were crisp and bright. The outdoor fire pit was a popular spot in the evenings after the "official" activities were complete. We had a great time renewing old friendships and seeing all the changes the area has gone through since our days in uniform.

I have been playing around with a new Artificial Intelligence website "OpenAI/ChatGTP" recently, and the Association officers liked the results a lot more than I expected.

I fed the following information into "ChatGTP":

"Attended USS Robert E Lee SSBN(601) 2022 reunion at Hilton garden inn in Groton Connecticut October. 111 attending, 60 crew, 51 guests. Toured Groton sub base and visited Submarine museum. Write article."

After a very short bit ChatGTP sent me back:

The USS Robert E Lee SSBN (601) reunion took place in Groton, Connecticut in October of 2022, bringing together 111 attendees, including 60 crew members and 51 guests. The reunion was held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Groton, providing the perfect venue for old friends to catch up and reminisce about their time together on the submarine.

One of the highlights of the reunion was the tour of the Groton Submarine Base. The base, which is the oldest submarine base in the country, is located on the east bank of the Thames River in Groton, Connecticut. The base is home to the US Navy's Submarine Force, which is responsible for maintaining the country's nuclear-powered submarines.

During the tour, the attendees were able to see firsthand the inner workings of the base, including the submarine maintenance facilities, training facilities, and support infrastructure. They were also able to see the various types of submarines that are currently in service, including the Ohio-class submarines, which are the largest submarines in the US Navy.

Another highlight of the reunion was the visit to the Submarine Museum in Groton. The museum, which is located on the grounds of the Submarine Base, is dedicated to preserving the history of the US Submarine Force. The museum features a variety of exhibits, including a collection of submarines, artifacts, and memorabilia.

The museum's exhibits include everything from the earliest submarines to the most modern nuclearpowered submarines. There are also exhibits that showcase the daily life of submariners, as well as the various missions

that submarines have been involved in throughout history. Aside from the tours, the reunion also provided plenty of opportunities for the attendees to catch up with old friends and make new ones. The event was filled with laughter, good food, and memories that will last a lifetime.

In conclusion, the USS Robert E Lee SSBN (601) reunion was a wonderful opportunity for former crew members to reconnect and remember their time together on the submarine. The tours of the Groton Submarine Base and the Submarine Museum provided a fascinating look at the history and technology of the US Submarine Force. And the friendships that were rekindled during the reunion will undoubtedly last a lifetime.

Well what do y'all think?

It kind'a overdid the Sub Base tour, because I didn't tell it was only a "windshield" tour. But it is still pretty impressive. Unfortunately for me, it brings to mind "The Terminator" and "I Robot" movies. Scary!



We Are Going Where?

I really don't know. Maybe it was the free drinks. Talk about off the wall! Anyhow the crew voted to have the next (2024) reunion in WISCONSIN! Yep, that's right. Manitowoc to be exact. After all it is kind'a the middle of the country. Never heard of the place? Count me in on that one as well.

That's all we know for now. Joe will be leaving soon to do a scouting and planning trip to start bringing it all together. Following newsletters will have a lot more specific information for your next reunion planning. But let's ask my new friend(?) ChatGTP what he/she/it thinks.



I asked ChatGTP:

"Tell me about Manitowoc, Wisconsin as a submarine reunion destination."

Here's what I got back:

Manitowoc, Wisconsin has a rich history when it comes to submarines and is a popular destination for submarine reunions. Here are some reasons why:

1. Submarine Veterans Memorial Park: Manitowoc is home to the Submarine Veterans Memorial Park, which is a beautiful tribute to those who served on submarines. The park features a World War II-era submarine, the USS Cobia, which is open for tours. Visitors can explore the sub and learn about life on board.
2. Maritime Museum: The Wisconsin Maritime Museum in Manitowoc is a great place to learn more about the area's maritime history. The museum features exhibits on submarines, shipbuilding, commercial fishing, and more. It also has a collection of artifacts from the USS Cobia.
3. S.S. Badger: The S.S. Badger is a car ferry that runs between Manitowoc and Ludington, Michigan. The ferry is a popular attraction and offers a unique way to travel across Lake Michigan. Many submarine reunions have taken place on board the S.S. Badger.
4. Local accommodations: Manitowoc has a number of hotels and other accommodations that are well-suited for submarine reunions. Many of these properties offer group rates and other special amenities for reunions.
5. Local attractions: In addition to the submarine-related attractions, Manitowoc has plenty of other things to see and do. Visitors can explore local parks, take a scenic drive along Lake Michigan, visit local breweries and wineries, and more. Overall, Manitowoc, Wisconsin is a great destination for submarine reunions. With its rich history, unique attractions, and welcoming atmosphere, it's no wonder that so many submarine veterans choose to gather here.

Hummm... I'm beginning to think the crew is a little smarter than I thought they were. Must be all those Nukes? NOT!

Even the time of the year is unknown. Joe intends to parlay with the Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Bureau on which would be best. Spring, April/May or Fall, September/October. It's definitely a part of the country most of the crew has probably not seen, so it will be a new experience for many. From the pictures and video I have seen, it should be a pleasant destination no matter the season. Well at least as long as it is not WINTER!

New Website News

For all those who may not know, the old Lee website which was hosted on the USSVI National Organization's "Decklog" has been shut down. USSVI is no longer providing websites for US Submarines.

To insure our crew has easy access to all things Lee on the Web, we have launched yet again another "new" R E Lee website:

<https://ssbn601.org/>

This website is fully funded by your R E Lee Association. Therefore your Association has complete control. We will no longer be at the mercy of any third parties for our ongoing presence on the Web.

The foremost requirement for the design of this new website is to insure crew communication and timely information distribution. We have retained as much other Lee related media and information as we were able to transfer from our older Lee websites. This process is ongoing and we are always looking for new content. Hint, hint.

We have transfered as much of the "Crew List" as was possible. The critical stuff, crew contact information, was the top priority. Much of the additional individual crew service information could not be transfered. For those of you who wish to publicly publish your service history and highlights, I would strongly suggest you consider posting that information on the "Navy Memorial" website:

<https://www.navymemorial.org/navy-log>

We are asking all crew members to log on to the new R E Lee Website's "Crew List" and verify their information:

<https://ssbn601.org/index.php?content=template/crewlogin.html>

If you do not remember your old "Decklog" log in information please send the new website Web Manager, that would be me, an email request for your log in information. (See bottom of any new Website page.)

One more very important feature of the new website is the "Next Reunion" page:

<https://ssbn601.org/index.php?content=nxtreunion/nxtreunion24.php>

This is where you need to check for the very latest and most current information related to an upcoming reunion. This will save you the time it requires to get the same information emailed from one of the Association officers, who will most likely refer you to this page anyhow.



Association News

Election Results

At the reunion business meeting, the crew held an Association officers' election. As a result, Joe White was unanimously reelected Association President. Dale Thompson got some relief by retaining the Secretary/Treasure's hat. And Bryan Ersek was elected to take the Vice President's hat. Unfortunately, I was not requested to resign.

Next Reunion

As noted previously, the crew in their well practiced, dance of the seven seabages, selected Wisconsin as the next reunion destination. We just never know what is coming next.


Crew Involvement

With the launch of the new Association website, we are hoping for increased communication with the crew to better serve our shipmates. Hopefully, the website ping-pong location will be no more, as we (Association) have the "CON". We are now more easily able to communicate with the crew both with email, and as a second source, snail mail. We currently have 551 shipmates with E Mail addresses and 825 with snail mail addresses. We have a total of 1800+ crew members names, but unfortunately many of the profiles contain little information.

The new website now provides direct access for crew members to check and update their personal "profile" on the Association's "Crew List". No more request and maybe receive your changes flim-flam. We continue to work on enhancements to the website and Crew List features. Currently a crew member can control his own profile content and presentation, as well as monitor his Association dues status and history. I'm working on the ability to also display reunion attendance history as well. Both of these features, dues and reunion history, begin with the implementation date of the new website as the old history for both was unsalvageable.

Association Dues

Currently we are still collecting the dues and reunion fees the old horse and buggy way--pen, check book, envelope and lick the stamp. With full control of our new website, we hope in the near future to offer online transactions to greatly ease the effort of all involved to support your Association and crew activities. To that end, please see the dues form shown below.



SSBN/SSN 601 Association Dues Form

Name: _____

Email: _____

Years: ____ **X \$10.00 =** _____

Make check payable to: Robert E. Lee Association

Please mail to:

USS Robert E Lee Association

C/O Dale Thompson

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