

COLUMBUS BASE SUBMARINE VETERANS

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The Green Board



ALL SEAS ARE NAVIGABLE



In this May 23, 2012 file photo, smoke rises from a dry dock as fire crews respond to a fire on the USS Miami SSN 755 submarine at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard on an island in Kittery, Maine. Four people were injured.

A fire that started in a vacuum cleaner won't sink the USS Miami, which will be repaired at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

Preliminary findings show that the fire that caused more than \$400 million in damages to the submarine started in the vacuum cleaner used to clean the work site at the end of a shift, officials at the naval shipyard said Wednesday.

U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, D-2nd District, said he was told by the Navy's senior leaders at Saturday's commissioning of the newest Virginia-class submarine that repairing the Miami is "going to be the path forward."

"We're not scrapping it," Courtney said Wednesday.

The shipyard did not provide any further details on the cause of the fire in its statement. It did say the repairs would be done at the Portsmouth, which means the work will not go to Electric Boat in Groton as members of Connecticut's congressional delegation had hoped.

The Miami (SSN 755) was in a dry dock at the shipyard for maintenance and upgrades when it caught fire at 5:41 p.m. May 23 and burned until 3:30 a.m. the next day. On Wednesday morning, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Fire Department responded to a fire alarm aboard the sub, but the shipyard later said it was a false alarm.

Courtney said he was told the Miami blaze started after burning embers in the vacuum ignited other refuse in the machine.

The first responders went to the wrong level of the submarine after an alarm sounded, giving the fire time to spread, said Courtney, who didn't know whether the alarm system or the first responders misidentified the level.

The Navy has estimated repairs to the sub at about \$440 million, or a base of \$400 million plus 10 percent due to the disruption of other planned work across all naval shipyards and the potential need to contract with the private sector.

Continued page three.



Tolling of the Boats



USS O-9 (SS-70) Lost on 20 June 1941 with 34 men when it foundered off the Isle of Shoals, 15 miles from Portsmouth, New Hampshire.



USS S-27 (SS-132) Lost on 19 June 1942 when it grounded off Amchitka Island. All the crew were rescued.



USS Herring (SS-233) Lost with all hands (84 men) on 1 June 1944 by a Japanese shore battery and surface craft off Matsuwa Island, Kuriles.

USS R-12 (SS-89) Lost with 42 men off Key West, Florida, to unknown causes on 12 June 1943. Three men survived.



USS Runner (SS-275) Lost with all hands (78 men) by possible Japanese mine between Midway Island and Japan in June 1943.



USS Golet (SS-361) Lost with all hands (84 men) during a Japanese surface attack off Honshu, Japan on 14 June 1944.



USS Bonfish (SS-223) Lost with all hands (86 men) on 18 June 1945 when it was sunk in Toyama Wan in the Sea of Japan.

OUR CREED

“ 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 of America and its Constitution.”

That figure was already provided to Congress, Courtney said, since the Navy's shipbuilding budget is moving forward.

The investigation into the cause and damage assessment is ongoing. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service was looking into whether there may have been any criminal wrongdoing, such as arson, but Courtney said NCIS quickly determined there wasn't any and closed its investigation.

A spokeswoman for the Portsmouth facility said she could not immediately say whether the shipyard has changed its practices for how vacuum cleaners are used and stored there.

While the investigation continues, John Holmänder, vice president of operations at Electric Boat in Groton, said he could only say that EB "takes all appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of the workplace."

EB built the Los Angeles-class submarine for \$900 million. It was commissioned at the Naval Submarine Base in Groton in 1990 and arrived at the Portsmouth shipyard in March for a 20-month overhaul.

The fire damaged the torpedo room, command and control spaces and berthing areas. The reactor had been shut down for more than two months at the time of the fire, and the nuclear propulsion spaces were not affected, according to the Navy. No weapons were on board.

A team from EB was at the shipyard Monday to help the Navy assess the damage. Courtney said he anticipates a "robust shuttle" of EB experts to the shipyard and expects some of the work that would've gone to the naval shipyard to go elsewhere, such as EB, while the yard is busy with the Miami.

The Navy is considering using parts from the USS Memphis, another Los Angeles-class submarine, to repair the Miami. The Memphis, a Groton sub, was decommissioned last year and is at the Portsmouth shipyard.

Courtney said he did not know how long the repairs would take but said it would be longer than the 20 months planned for the overhaul.

The shipyard's workforce has removed water from the submarine and installed lighting and staging. The Navy plans to award a contract for the detailed cleaning this week. Navy engineers are analyzing the hull, and the cost estimate for the repairs will continue to be refined, according to the naval shipyard.

U.S. Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, was the first member of Congress to go inside the submarine Monday.

"The Navy has been working full speed ahead to determine the cause of the fire and the extent of the damage," Pingree said in a statement Wednesday. "They've done a great job inspecting the boat quickly and efficiently and I'm confident we will have more detailed information about what's needed for repairs in the near future."

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Today In Undersea Warfare History: (June 11th)

1853 - Five Navy ships leave Norfolk, VA on 3 year exploring expedition to survey the far Pacific

1927 - USS Memphis arrives at Washington, DC, with Charles Lindbergh and his plane, Spirit of St. Louis, after his non-stop flight across the Atlantic

1945 - USS Sea Leopard (SS 483) is commissioned

1952 - USS Gudgeon (SS 567) is launched

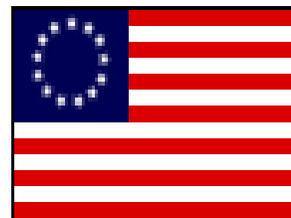
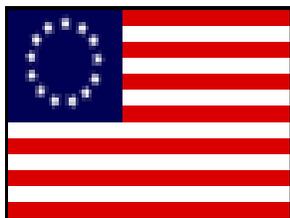
Today In Undersea Warfare History: (June 12th)

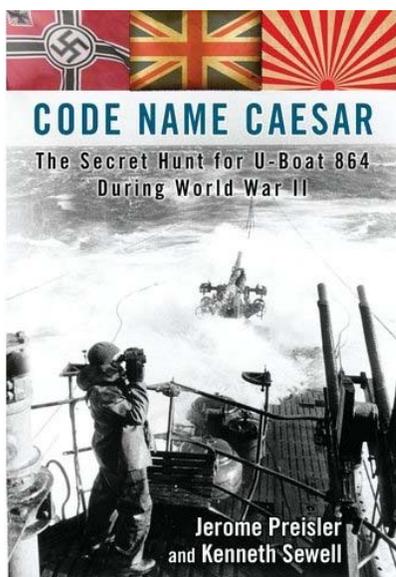
1943 - USS R-12 (SS-89) was lost along with 42 officers and men when it foundered off Key West, 24° 24'30"N 81° 28'30"

1944 - USS Bergall (SS 320) is commissioned

Memorial Day Parade

Worthington Ohio





Ken Sewell's newest book can be pre ordered thru the base. Cost will be \$20 each, picked up at the base meetings. Shipping will be extra. Get your copy ordered now.

Pay at pickup. Contact Dave Creekmore 740-928-1780 or creek636@columbus.rr.com

Navy Orders Submarine Escape Suits

UPI.com, May 21, 2012

SHARON CENTER, Ohio, May 21 (UPI) — The U.S. Navy has given the Survitec Group an initial order for escape suits for its submarine crews.

The RFD Beaufort Mk11 suit, or Submarine Escape Immersion Equipment, is a single-skinned suit full-body with a breathing

device and affords protection from hypothermia. It also features an integrated life raft.

The suits were designed at Survitec Group's center of excellence in Birkenhead, U.K.

"We're extremely proud to be supplying our U.S. Navy submariners in what is a very important contract for Survitec and our

workforce in Sharon Center [Ohio]," said David Abbott, managing director of Survitec's Ohio facility. "Our company pioneered

submarine escape technology in 1952 and has continually evolved its offering to the current high standard of the SEIE Mk11."

The initial order – for "several thousand" — RFD Beaufort SEIE Mk11 suits is worth \$25 million but the company said possible

contract extensions could eventually lead to more than \$60 million in orders.

"To Be Three Sheets in the Wind"

In the days of sailing ships, this is a phrase which refers to the lines used to control the sails of sailing vessels. When these sheets are cast to the wind (let go), it would cause the old sailing ships to shudder and stagger. The resulting track would be the same as that of a drunken sailor, out of control, and hence "three sheets in the wind."

Annual Summer Picnic Saturday June 2nd

Singing for the crowd
Base member
Wade Kiger



The Hog Roasters
Left to right:
Manny, Dan & Kathy Krile





You can see more pictures from the picnic on the Website.

www.columbusbase.com



Navy Issues Guidelines In Light Of USS Miami Fire

By Jim Haddadin, Fosters.com, June 9, 2012

KITTERY, Maine — Navy investigators believe the fire that ravaged a nuclear submarine at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard last month was kindled by an undisclosed "heat source" that was sucked into a vacuum cleaner.

The Navy issued new guidelines for storing and emptying the vacuum cleaners this week after disclosing that a vacuum cleaner is being eyed as the fire's point of origin.

On Wednesday, the Navy said the vacuum was stored in an unoccupied part of the USS Miami's forward area, but disclosed few other details.

A second announcement released Friday afternoon provided some additional information. According to the Navy, investigators believe the fire started with a "heat source being vacuumed up and igniting the debris in the vacuum cleaner."

The announcement goes on to state the "vacuums" involved in the incident were not plugged in, and there was no apparent defect that would have caused the "vacuums" to ignite.

Foster's Daily Democrat requested clarification Friday from the Navy regarding how many vacuums were involved in the fire.

"I cannot confirm that it was a single vacuum," shipyard public affairs specialist Gary Hildreth said in response. "Multiple vacuums were stored in the same area, but none of them were plugged in."

According to the Navy announcement, the equipment involved in the fire was used to clean work sites at ends of shifts. The vacuum was a model typically found in shop environments.

Hildreth declined to comment on the nature of the "heat source" that sparked the fire.

In the wake of the incident, all public shipyards have now been directed to empty industrial-style shop vacuums each shift or remove them from ships, according to Friday's announcement.

"Additional inspections of ships have also been conducted for fire safety and fire fighting response with special attention on temporary services and the stowage of combustible materials on board," the announcement states.

All Navy ships and shipyards use some form of vacuum cleaner, according to the announcement.

Naval Sea Systems Command is reviewing all models of vacuum cleaners in use on ships, and will issue guidelines on what models are authorized for use by the end of June.

Seven people suffered minor injuries during the May 23 blaze, which spread through the forward area of the USS Miami, a nuclear-powered submarine undergoing an overhaul. The fire continued to burn for more than 10 hours before it was extinguished.

The Navy has approximated the damage at \$400 million, plus another \$40 million for so-called "secondary effects," such as disruption to other planned work across all Navy shipyards and the potential need to hire private contractors.

Navy engineers are conducting a full technical assessment including internal and external hull surveys and damage assessments to develop a detailed cost estimate to restore the forward end compartment.

The Navy is conducting formal Judge Advocate General Manual (JAGMAN) and Safety investigations to address lessons learned, and corrective actions to preclude recurrence. Initial reports of their conclusions and recommendations are expected in the next two weeks.

Navy officials have indicated the USS Miami can be salvaged, but have not decided whether to carry out the repairs. They are expected to make the decision by the end of the coming week, Maine Sen. Olympia Snowe said in an announcement Wednesday.

As the Navy continued to investigate the accident this week, Seacoast-area firefighters received national recognition for their part in helping to extinguish the fire.

Emergency responders from at least 21 Seacoast-area communities provided aid during the fire. Others traveled from Logan International Airport in Boston, and from as far away as Groton, Conn., to assist.

The U.S. Senate on Thursday passed a resolution recognizing the firefighters, emergency first responders, and USS Miami crew.

Sponsors included Sens. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., Scott Brown, R-Mass., Susan Collins, R-Maine, John Kerry, D-Mass., Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., and Jeanne Shaheen, D-NH.

The resolution commends the "service of all those who successfully contained the fire, minimized damage to the submarine, and ensured there was no loss of life," according to an announcement from Snowe's office.

"Their exemplary efforts during those 10 hours in tight quarters filled with noxious smoke and searing heat, while minimizing damage and ensuring there was no loss of life, receives our unending praise and commendation," reads a joint statement released by the lawmakers Friday.



Upcoming Events

June 16th	0900	Base Officers meeting at the AmVets Post #89. All are welcome
July 4th	0900	Upper Arlington July 4th parade. Step off at 0900 Watch emails for further details
July 7th	1200	Monthly base meeting at the AmVets Post #89





July Birthdays

Tim France	07-05
Bob Donahue	07-10
Russ Ferguson	07-16
Bruce Sanderson	07-24
Chris Leonard	07-29



The Conn

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Tim Barker

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Bob McDaniel

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Sharon Lloyd / Walt Fleak

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Membership Chairman

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Editor

Jan Creekmore

Activates Chairmen

Remember to bring your donations of
coffee, tea, or hot cocoa to the
monthly meetings.

Your donations are very much appre-
ciated by the veterans at the Chalmers
P. Wylie Veterans Clinic.

Editor's Note

If you have comments or articles, please contact
the base newsletter editor.

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