

World War II Shipmates Meet In Supermarket Checkout Line

BY RAHN ADAMS

In the spring of 1945, Ensign Albert Boehme passed up a commercial flight from Australia back to the United States. Instead, he decided to work his way across the Pacific on a U.S. Navy submarine.

Some 36 years later, Boehme retired from his profession as a heavy equipment distributor in the Northeast and decided to move to a warmer climate. He and his wife, Edna, chose the North Carolina coast.

Those two decisions seemed totally unrelated until about two months ago, when the 73-year-old Holden Beach resident stopped at Wilson's Supermarket in Shallotte for some groceries. There, by chance, he came face to face with a link to his past.

Stock clerk Mike Bishop, 67, of Boone's Neck, was busy bagging groceries when the apparent stranger asked Bishop on a whim if he had ever served in the Navy. It didn't take the two men long to realize that their paths had crossed before—on a 46-day submarine war patrol from Fremantle, Australia, to San Francisco, California, aboard the USS Rock in World War II.

"I came through the line getting my groceries, and Mike was at the other end of the line," Boehme recalled in a joint interview last week.

He added that he had no idea the two had been shipmates when he made his inquiry of Bishop. "I did not recognize him," Boehme said. "He looked too young, and I looked too old."

Bishop, who has been in touch with other USS Rock crew members since the war, also was surprised to find out that Boehme has lived at Holden Beach for the past seven years.

"I didn't recognize him either," Bishop said, "but after I met him and got to thinking back, yes, I remembered him."

But to say the two ex-sailors were bosom buddies on the submarine wouldn't be entirely true, because Boehme was an officer and Bishop was an enlisted man. Also, the war patrol they shared was Bishop's sixth on the USS Rock, while it was Boehme's first assignment on that particular submarine.

"He's an old plank-owner," Boehme said of Bishop, who was among the ship's original crew. The submarine was launched on Lake Michigan at Manitowoc, Wisconsin, in 1943.

The two men's respective day-to-day duties on war patrol allowed them to see each other only in passing—that is, until the submarine's 82 crew members took their battle stations.

"It was a very, very hectic trip for me," Boehme said, "because I was learning to be a gunnery officer."

In battle, Bishop was stationed near the gunnery crew as the submarine's stern planesman, his job being to control the angle of the ship underwater.

According to a copy of the ship's log, the war patrol covered 13,998 miles, with 15 days spent submerged.



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

FORMER USS ROCK CREWMEN Albert Boehme (left) and Mike Bishop look over old photographs of the U.S. Navy submarine that carried them from Australia to California on a 46-day patrol during World War II. Until two months ago, the two men didn't know they lived only several miles apart in the Holden Beach area.

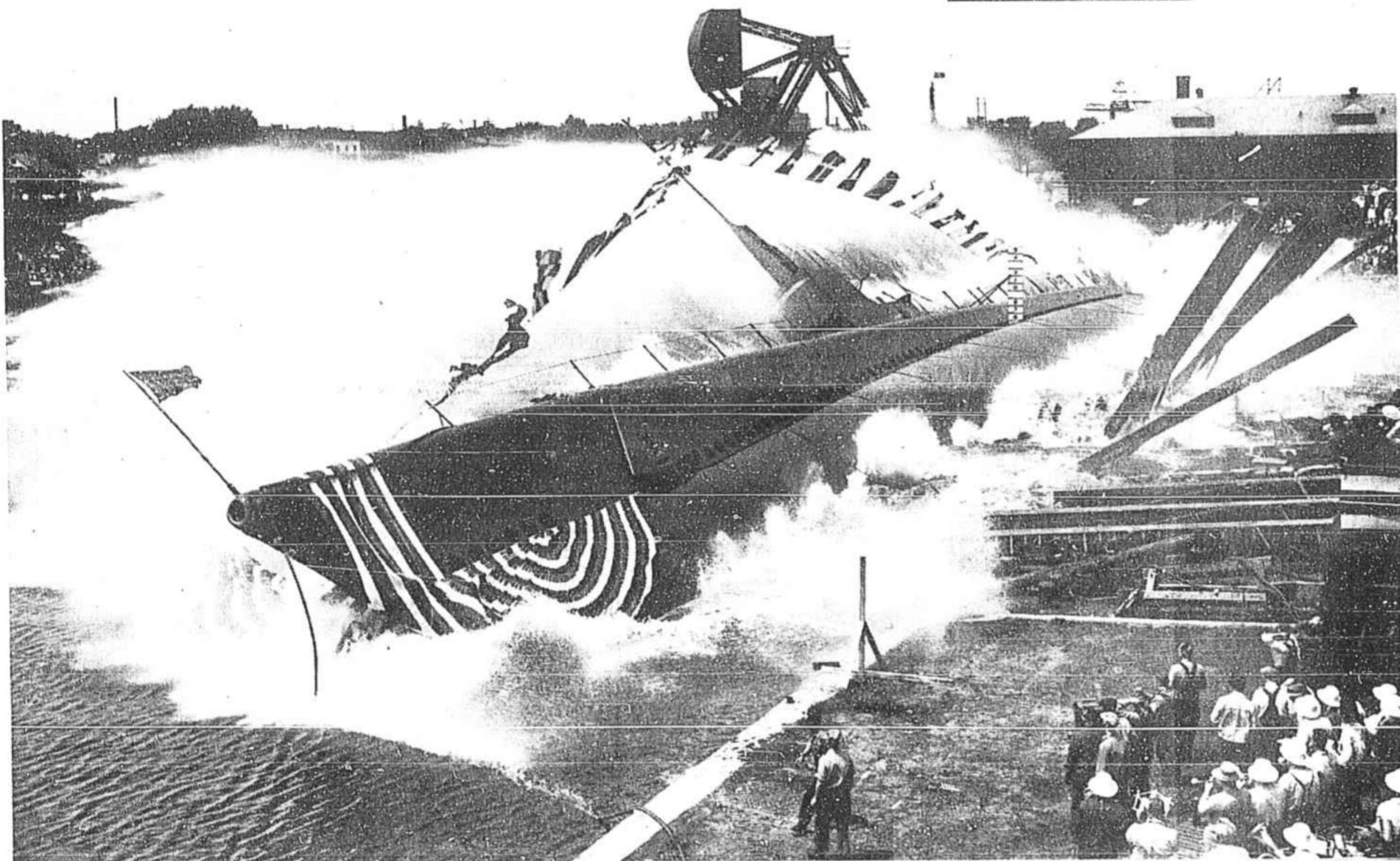


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

FOLLOWING ITS LAUNCHING on June 20, 1943, at Manitowoc, Wis., on Lake Michigan, the submarine USS ROCK completed six war patrols in the Pacific during World War II.

While on patrol, the USS Rock sank a Japanese destroyer and demolished an enemy radio station on Batan Island. In turn, the submarine was hit by a dud torpedo, then by an unidentified object dropped from a Japanese bomber.

"With a little luck, we did come out with a successful patrol," Boehme said.

When the 46-day patrol ended in San Francisco in May 1945, the two men went their separate ways. Boehme, an 11-year Navy veteran, was discharged the following year. Bishop served until his retirement from the Navy in 1966, his entire career spent with submarines.

Before retiring to Holden Beach in 1981, Boehme lived in New York and Connecticut, where he worked with several heavy equipment companies and owned an International Harvester dealership for a time.

After leaving the service, Bishop was employed by a Norfolk, Va., dredging company for 10 years. He and his wife, Virginia, who died in March 1987, retired to Boone's Neck 11 years ago.

Both men said they moved to Brunswick County mainly for two reasons—its climate and its location.

"I've lived next to water all my life, and I spent 24 years in the Navy," Bishop said. "Now I'm only three miles from the ocean." He added that he enjoys watching ships sail the Brunswick County coast.

Boehme was more emphatic about his choice of a new home. "I couldn't find anything that beat Holden Beach," he said.

Besides, not every sailor can find a place that comes complete with an old shipmate.

Health News . . .

Spinal Misalignments Linked To Recurring Headaches

BY DR. VICTORIA E. WEBSTER
Doctor of Chiropractic

According to recent estimates, more than 20 million Americans may be victims of chronic headaches.

In a pamphlet produced by the California Chiropractic Association, it is suggested that many of these headaches are caused by structural spinal misalignment. As an example, the pamphlet cites the distribution of "Sympathetic" nerves that pass through the neck to influence the circulation of blood through the head. Poor posture in the neck or poor head carriage could produce nerve interference which would result in headaches. The pamphlet further points to poor postural habits and abnormal sleeping positions as major causes of headaches.

Poor posture causes a gradual shifting of the normal curvature of the spine which results in the reduction of the size of the open-

ings between the spinal segments through which nerves pass. When this happens, the nerves are "pinched" and cannot function properly. Such malfunction can be likened to the cause of a garden hose which has been pinched by someone stepping on it. Even if the faucet is turned on full force, only a trickle of water will come out the end of the hose so long as the person's foot is pinching it.

Many people are in the habit of sleeping on their stomachs with the head turned to one side. This causes a distortion of the neck and over a prolonged period of time the distortion will become "set." This may cause a disturbance of the nerves that serve the head and produce headaches. Unless this distortion is corrected, the headache problem will continue.

Chronic headache sufferers should consult a Doctor of



DR. VICTORIA E. WEBSTER

Chiropractic who is trained to deal with spinal misalignments and distortions to see if he can solve their problems.

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