

USS CORPORAL

Ship of the Month

USS CORPORAL (SS 346), Our Navy's "Ship of the Month" for December, was a strong runner-up in the 1966 "Ship of the Year" contest.

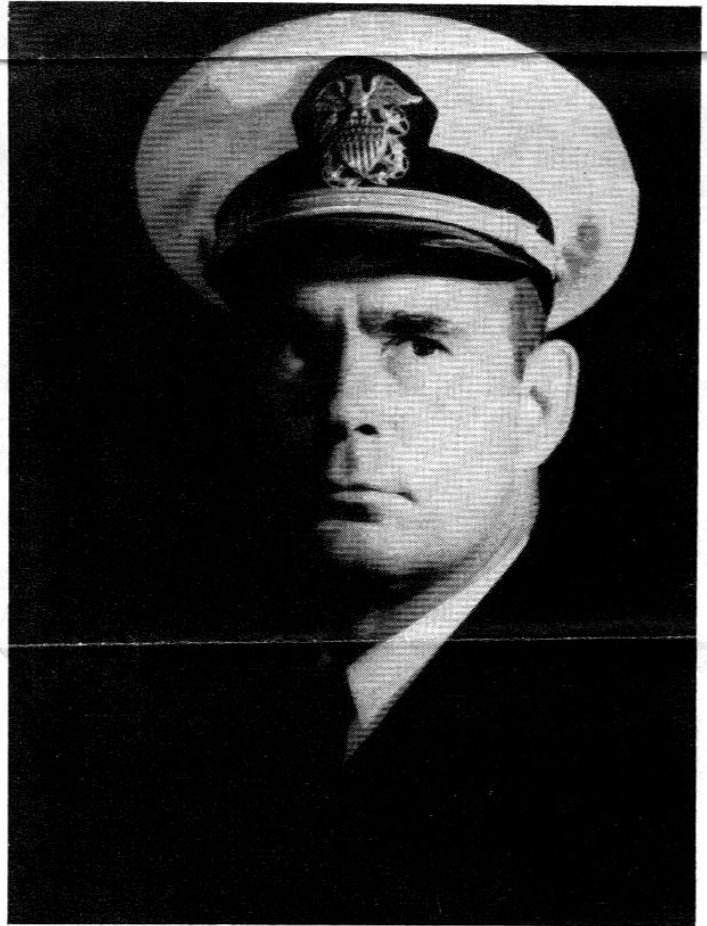
In proudly nominating the veteran ship for the 1966 award, the Commander Submarine Force, United States Atlantic Fleet stated: "Although this venerable diesel submarine counts over twenty years of continuous service for these United States, her performance has been truly remarkable in all the categories required for the award." This enthusiastic accolade was in concurrence with the ship's nomination by the Commander, Submarine Flotilla TWO, under whose immediate command she operates.

The following data was advanced by the Commander Submarine Flotilla TWO in support of this nomination:

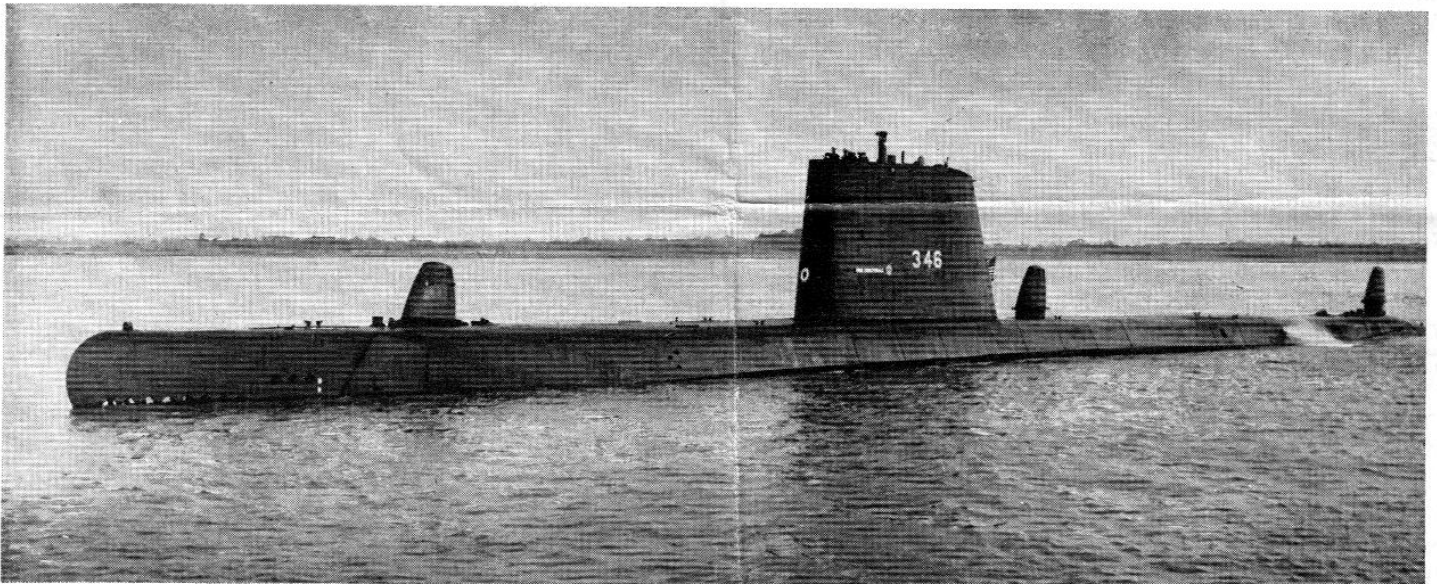
"During the Year 1966 CORPORAL has consistently exhibited the highest standards of performance and readiness. Her skillful performance, outstanding operational competence and material readiness were major contributions to the unqualified success of two special operations of vast importance to the United States Government.

"CORPORAL's 1966 record has been exemplary, as exhibited by her receiving the Battle Efficiency Pennant, the Torpedo Fire Control and Performance Award, and by being nominated for the Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy and the Providence Plantations Council Award.

"A major contributing factor to CORPORAL's outstanding performance has been the high state of crew



Lieutenant Commander Walter Bates Hubbell, USN, Commanding Officer of the Corporal.



morale. With only forty-four days between long deployments on special operations, leave schedules were revised and individuals plans adjusted in order to devote maximum effort to readying the ship for deployment. Even under these trying conditions the morale and performance of the officers and men of CORPORAL was of the highest order. When the ship deployed on that operation, she was in outstanding condition in all respects.

"The Esprit de Corps, loyalty and overall smartness of CORPORAL along with an outstanding training program rigorously pursued has contributed greatly to her excellent reenlistment rate, submarine qualification, and advancement in rate status."

CORPORAL's present commanding officer is Lieutenant Commander Walter Bates Hubbell, USN.

A perusal of the Ship's history reveals that she was built by the Electric Boat Company at Groton, Connecticut. The keel was laid on April 27, 1945, and the launching took place on June 10, 1945, only forty-four days later. Commissioning and delivery to the Navy took place on November 9, 1945, at the United States Naval Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut, with Commander Edward Ellis SHELBY as the first Commanding Officer.

Commander SHELBY was relieved as Commanding Officer on January 7, 1946, by Commander F. S. HESS, United States Navy, and on the next day CORPORAL departed New London on her shakedown cruise to the Canal Zone, Republic of Panama. Successfully completing this, her first big test, she joined Submarine Squadron FOUR at Key West, Florida.

During 1946 and 1947 the vessel served in various anti-submarine exercises in the Key West area and in the February 1947 Fleet Exercises. Returning to Groton, Connecticut, in 1948, she was converted to a GUPPY II class submarine. This conversion entailed the removal of all deck guns, installation of newer, more powerful batteries, the installation of the Snorkel System to allow the diesel engines to operate submerged, and the streamlining of the hull.

CORPORAL's story during the succeeding twenty-busy years is too long and varied to be told in detail. However, even though fragmentary, the remainder of this coverage gives the general picture of a gallant ship's continued, devoted and highly active service to the United States of America.

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On October 15, 1960, Lieutenant Commander Stephen J. O'Leary, United States Navy, assumed command. In November CORPORAL deployed to European waters, visiting Bremerhaven, Kiel, and Hamburg, Germany, and working with the Federal German Navy in the Baltic and North Seas. Following these operations the ship entered the Mediterranean, spending the Christmas holidays in the Principality of Monaco.

On January 5, 1961, she went to sea as part of an operational readiness inspection made by Vice Admiral Elton W. Grenfell, United States Navy, Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. Also on board for the short cruise were Prince Rainier, Princess Grace and Prince Pierre the father of Prince Rainier.

While in the Mediterranean CORPORAL served

with the SIXTH Fleet. Before returning to Charleston, South Carolina, she visited Toulon, France; Barcelona, Spain; and Gibraltar.

During her four-month deployment the following six "firsts" were recorded:

She was the first American submarine to operate with the Federal German Navy in German Waters;

She was the first American submarine to transit the Kiel Canal;

She was the first American submarine to visit Kiel, Germany;

She was the first American submarine to visit Hamburg, Germany;

She was the first American submarine to visit San Remo, Italy;

And she provided Princess Grace of Monaco her first cruise on a submarine.

In February 1962 the ship entered the Charleston Naval Shipyard to undergo a ten-month conversion from a GUPPY II to a GUPPY III class submarine. During this period she was placed "in commission, in reserve". This conversion included slicing the ship in half, adding a fifteen foot section amidships and installing a higher, plastic sail over the Conning Tower. The lengthening of the hull facilitated the installation of much new and sophisticated electronic and weapons systems equipment. Obsolete equipment was replaced by more modern equipment and other equipment was completely overhauled.

On 4 March 1963, CORPORAL returned to New London and made preparations to become the first submarine to fire the MK 45 (ASTOR) torpedo. A successful launch of the exercise mode of this new torpedo was completed in June 1963.

On July 29, Lieutenant Commander Clifford Paul Barnes, United States Navy relieved Commander S. J. O'Leary as Commanding Officer. During the Change of Command ceremony CORPORAL received the Annual Award for Excellence in Torpedo Fire Control and Performance for fiscal year 1963 in Submarine Division TWENTY-ONE.

One month later on 28 August, CORPORAL departed on SUBAUTEX-63 and conducted this operation during the months September, October, and November.

On 4 April 1964, she departed for a four month Mediterranean Cruise to participate in training exercise with the U.S. SIXTH Fleet. In the Mediterranean, CORPORAL participated in many exercises with the U.S. Nuclear Powered Task Group, ENTERPRISE, (CVA (N)-65), LONG BEACH (CG-(N)-9), and BAINBRIDGE (DLG-(N)-25). While operating with the SIXTH Fleet, the ship participated in Operation FAIRGAME II under the operational control of a French Submarine Commander. This large scale exercise was conducted with U.S. and French surface ships and submarines and included an amphibious assault.

These brief extracts from her history, combined with the high praise of both Flotilla and Type Commanders (quoted previously) for her outstanding achievements during 1966, show that CORPORAL, despite her venerable age, still leads the pack.

OUR NAVY congratulates her, her fine officers and crew.