

## USS Scorpion (SSN 589)



*Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet*

# *USS Scorpion (SSN 589)*

## *May 27, 1968 - 99 Men Lost*

USS Scorpion (SSN-589) was declared lost on 2 June-1968 with the loss of 99 officers and men when it sank west of Azores while in transit from Mediterranean Sea.



## USS Scorpion (SSN 589)

- Keel laid down by Electric Boat Div., General Dynamics Corp., 20AUG58;
- Launched: 19DEC59; Sponsored by Mrs. Elizabeth S. Morrison;
- Commissioned: 29JUL60 with Cdr. Norman B. Bessac in command.

Assigned to SubRon5, SubDiv62, USS SCORPION (SSN-589) departed New London, Connecticut, on 24 August 1960 for a two-month deployment in European waters. During that period, she participated in exercises with units of the 6th Fleet and of other NATO navies. After returning to New England in late October, she trained along the eastern seaboard until May 1961; then crossed the Atlantic again for operations which took her into the summer. On 9 August, she returned to New London and, a month later, shifted to Norfolk, Virginia.

With Norfolk her home port for the remainder of her career, SCORPION specialized in the development of nuclear submarine warfare tactics. Varying her role from hunter to hunted, she participated in exercises which ranged along the Atlantic coast and in the Bermuda and Puerto Rican operating areas; then, from June 1963 to May 1964, she interrupted her operations for an overhaul in Charleston, South Carolina. Resuming duty off the eastern seaboard in late spring, she again interrupted that duty from 4 August to 8 October to make a transatlantic patrol. In the spring of 1965, she conducted a similar patrol.

During the late winter and early spring of 1966, and again in the fall, she was deployed for special operations. Following the completion of those assignments, her commanding officer received the Navy Commendation Medal for outstanding leadership, foresight, and professional skill. Other SCORPION officers and men were cited for meritorious achievement.

On 1 February 1967, SCORPION entered the Norfolk Naval Shipyard for another extended overhaul. In late October, she commenced refresher training and weapons system acceptance tests. Following type training out of Norfolk, she got underway on 15 February 1968 for a Mediterranean deployment. She operated with the 6th Fleet, into May, then headed west. On 21 May, she indicated her position to be about 50 miles south of the Azores. Six days later, she was reported overdue at Norfolk.

A search was initiated; but, on 2 June, SCORPION and all hands were declared, "presumed lost." Her name was struck from the Navy List on 30 June 1968.

The search continued, however and, at the end of October, the Navy's oceanographic research ship, Mizar, located sections of SCORPION's hull in more than 10,000 feet of water about 400 miles southwest of the Azores. Subsequently, the Court of Inquiry was reconvened and other vessels, including the submersible, Trieste, were dispatched to the scene, but, despite the myriad of data and pictures collected and studied, the cause of the loss remains a mystery.

## USS Scorpion (SSN 589)

SCORPION is in two major sections. The forward hull section including the torpedo room and most of the operations compartment is located in a trench that was formed by the impact of the hull section with the bottom. The sail is detached. The aft hull section including the reactor compartment and engine room is located in a separate trench that was formed by the impact of the hull section with the bottom. The aft section of the engine room is inserted forward into a larger diameter hull section in a manner similar to a telescope.

### *Shipmates on Eternal Patrol in USS SCORPION (SSN-589):*

Keith A.M. Allen, FTG2 / Thomas Edward Amtower, IC2 / George Gile Annable, MM2 / Joseph Anthony Barr, Jr., FN / Michael Jon Bailey, RM2 / Walter William Bishop, TMC / Michael Reid Blake, IC3 / Robert Harold Blocker, MM1 / Kenneth Ray Brocker, MM2 / James Kenneth Brueggeman, MM1 / Robert Eugene Bryan, MMC / John Patrick Burke, LT / Daniel Paul Burns, Jr., RMSN / Ronald Lee Byers, IC2 / Douglas Leroy Campbell, MM2 / Samuel Cardullo, MM2 / Francis King Carey, MM2 / Gary James Carpenter, SN / Robert Lee Chandler, MM1 / Mark Helton Christiansen, MM2 / Romeo Constantino, SD1 / Robert James Cowan, MM1 / Joseph Cross, SD1 / Garlin Ray Denney, RMC / Michael Edward Dunn, FN / Richard Philip Engelhart, ETR2 / George Patrick Farrin, LT / William Ralph Fennick, FTGSN / Robert Walter Flesch, LT / Vernon Mark Foli, IC3 / James Walter Forrester, Jr., LTjg / Ronald Anthony Frank, SN / Michael David Gibson, CSSN / Steven Dean Gleason, IC2 / William Clarke Harwi, LT / Michael Edward Henry, STS2 / Larry Leroy Hess, SK1 / Richard Curtis Hogeland, ET1 / John Richard Houge, MM1 / Ralph Robert Huber, EM2 / Harry David Huckelberry, TM2 / John Frank Johnson, EM3 / Robert Johnson, RMCS / Steven Leroy Johnson, IC3 / Julius Johnston, III, QM2 / Patrick Charles Kahane, FN / Donald Terry Karmasek, TM2 / Richard Allen Kerntke, MMCS / Rodney Joseph Kipp, ETR3 / Dennis Charles Knapp, MM3 / Charles Lee Lamberth, LT / Max Franklin Lanier, MM1 / John Weichert Livingston, ET1 / David Bennett Lloyd, LCDR / Kenneth Robert Martin, ETN2 / Frank Patsy Mazzuchi, QMCS / Michael Lee McGuire, ET1 / Steven Charles Miksad, TM3 / Joseph Francis Miller, Jr., TM3 / Cecil Frederick Mobley, MM2 / Raymond Dale Morrison, QM1 / Michael Anthony Odening, LTjg / Daniel Christopher Petersen, EMC / Dennis Paul Pherrer, QM3 / Gerald Stanley Pospisil, EM1 / Donald Richard Powell, IC3 / Earl Lester Ray, MM2 / Jorge Louis Santana, CS1 / Lynn Thompson Saville, HMC / Richard George Schaffer, ETN2 / William Newman Schoonover, SN / Phillip Allan Seifert, SN / Francis Atwood Slatery, CDR (CO) / George Elmer Smith, Jr., ETC / Laughton Douglas Smith, LTjg / Robert Bernard Smith, MM2 / Harold Robert Snapp, Jr., ST1 / Daniel Peter Stephens, LCDR / Joel Candler Stephens, ETN2 / David Burton Stone, MM2 / John Phillip Sturgill, EM2 / Richard Norman Summers, YN3 / John Driscoll Sweeney, Jr., TMSN / John Charles Sweet, LT / James Frank Tindol, III, ETN2 / Johnny Gerald Veerhusen, CSSN / Robert Paul Violetti, TM3 / Ronald James Voss, STS3 / John Michael Wallace, FTG1 / Joel Kurt Watkins, MM1 / Robert Westley Watson, MMFN / James Edwin Webb, MM2 / Leo William Weinbeck, YNCS / James Mitchell Wells, MMC / Ronald Richard Williams, SN /

USS Scorpion (SSN 589)

Robert Alan Willis, MM3 / Virgil Alexander Wright, III, IC1 / Donald Howard Yarbrough, TM1 / Clarence Otto Young, Jr., ETR2