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August 2016

In February of 1864 The Union Naval blockade was strangling the Confederacy, and as a major port, Charleston , South Carolina was a primary point of embarkation and debarkation of the Southern blockade runners. Food and other commodities including weapons and ammunition were in short supply. Among the blockading ships was the **USS Housatonic**, a steam and sail driven man-of-war, launched in 1861, with a crew of 160.

During the Housatonic's tour of duty with the Union blockade, she participated in shore bombardment of a number of Confederate installations and received credit for the capture of some Southern blockade runners and assisting in the capture or destruction of several others. Housatonic's war record was a credit to her officers and crew, but her place in history was confirmed when she became the first ship ever sunk by submarine action.

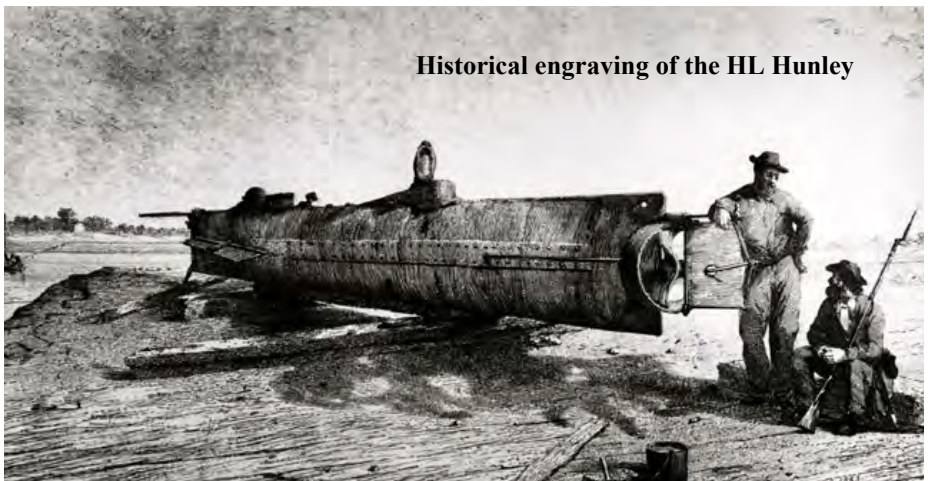


USS Housatonic

The responsibility for its sinking was the Confederate submarine, the **HL Hunley**. *The Hunley* was a small, hand-powered submarine, that was privately built at Mobile, Alabama, in 1863, based on plans furnished by Horace Lawson Hunley, James R. McClintock and Baxter Watson. Her construction was sponsored by Mr. Hunley and superintended by Confederate officers W.A. Alexander and G.E. Dixon. Following trials in Mobile Bay, she was transported to Charleston, South Carolina, in August 1863 to serve in the defense of that port. On 29 August, while moored to a steamer, the submarine was accidentally pulled over on its side and sank, drowning five members of her crew. After salvage, she was given a new crew and began a series of tests. However, during diving trials on 15 October 1863, she failed to surface. Horace Lawson Hunley, who was directing her operation, and the rest of her men were drowned. The small sub was again raised and repaired. With a third crew, surface, she began a series of attempts to attack United States Navy ships on blockade duty off Charleston. On 17 February 1864, these efforts were successful. The **H.L. Hunley** under the command of **Lt. George Dixon**, approached the **USS Housatonic** and detonated a spar torpedo against her side. The Federal ship sank rapidly, becoming the first war-

ship to be lost to a submarine's attack.

However, **H.L. Hunley** did not return from this mission, and was lost with all hands. Her fate remained a mystery for over 131 years, until May 1995, when a search led by author **Clive Cussler** located her wreck. On 8 August 2000, following extensive preliminary work, the **H.L. Hunley** was raised and taken to a conservation facility at the former Charleston Naval Base. This was done by a specially designed truss that was attached and cradled the submarine on the harbor bottom.



Historical engraving of the HL Hunley

CMHS Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on

**Tuesday,
August 16th
2016**

7:00 pm

At the
Petty Officers' Mess
HCMS Tecumseh

Continued page 2

is a non-profit registered society
which fosters the study of the
military and the police, and the heritage of
Canada, the British Empire, and the world
as well as the preservation of military
artifacts and records.

The CMHS meets once every calendar month
at: Petty Officers' Mess
HMCS Tecumseh
1820 - 24th Street SW
Calgary AB T2T 0G6

Notice of Next Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on
Tuesday, August 16th, 2016,
19:00 (7:00 pm)

At the Petty Officers' Mess, HMCS Tecumseh.
Members are reminded that an offering of foodstuffs for the Legion Food Bank is considered your unofficial entrance fee to our regular scheduled meetings.

The unofficial agenda of this meeting will be:
Introduction of guests, Minutes of last meeting Correspondence, Membership report Treasurer's report, Old business / New business Break, Show & Tell
The President, **Kevin Roberts** would like to invite everyone to remain after the meeting for an informal time of fellowship.



August 8th, 2000 the sub is lifted off the sea bed cradled in the truss



January 2012 the truss is removed entirely for the first time.

The 40-foot vessel, described as "curious" looking and resembling a whale, had watertight hatches, two short conning towers, sea cocks, pumps and ballast tanks. But there were shortcomings. There was constant concern about a sufficient oxygen supply for the crew, which limited its dive time. The Hunley was dependent on the crew hand-turning a crank to power the single propeller. Still, those who volunteered for the mission against the 205-foot USS Housatonic must have been well aware of the perils when approached by Hunley skipper Lt. Dixon.

"This took some serious bravery here. I wouldn't want to go in there," says forensic genealogist Linda Abrams, who has conducted extensive research on the Hunley crew. "They know some other people had drowned in it. They had to have some faith in Dixon."

On a chilly February evening the Hunley set out from Breach Inlet, which separates Sullivan's Island and what is now called the Isle of Palms. The vessel churned toward the Housatonic, about 4 miles away, at an estimated speed of 2 to 4 knots "While the cold bit through the lookout's coat ... men poured sweat over hand cranks that powered a spinning propeller while their captain manned the dive planes -- steering man, iron, anxiety and raw courage towards its final destination."

"A lookout aboard the Union Navy's largest ship was tired, cold -- but restless. Talk of a Confederate secret weapon was in and out of his thoughts. Suddenly he spotted something move in the chilly waters. A porpoise? There were certainly a lot of them around. But something about this one didn't seem right." Alarms went out on the Housatonic, which carried 12 guns. The Hunley was too close and low to be hit by artillery fire, so crew and officers of the Union ship fired small arms, rifles and even a shotgun at the approaching menace.

Once in place, a submarine crew member managed to pull the lanyard for the 135-pound torpedo, attached to a 16-foot spar that was still connected to the Hunley's bow.

The Housatonic sank within minutes with a loss of 5 crewmembers. Another 150 were rescued. The men and the submarine vanished.

In January 2013, Hunley scientists, who work for the Clemson University Restoration Institute, reported a significant discovery. "Until now, the conventional wisdom has been the Hunley would ram the spar torpedo into her target and then back away, causing the torpedo to slip off the spar." Instead, research showed the submarine was less than 20 feet from her torpedo when it exploded. It's possible that the force of the explosion incapacitated the crew, eventually causing the sub to slide down into the chilly depths. Researchers at the lab, while excavating the sub's interior silt that held the human remains, found the eight Hunley crew members were still at or near their stations, despite an unsealed forward hatch. **Continued page 4**

Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the **Calgary Military Historical Society**

Meeting held on July 19, 2016 at the Petty Officer's Mess, HMCS Tecumseh

Meeting called to order by President Kevin R. at 7:05 PM. 18 members and 1 guest Neil, in attendance.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting. Discussed and call for approval by Member David G. moves that the Pervious Meeting Minutes be accepted. Seconded by Don S. Approved, Unanimous.

3. Newsletter. No omissions or corrections.

4. Treasures Report. Report by Floyd S. Lists of monies collected from book auctions, donations etc. Listing of expenditures. Member Barry E. moves that the Treasures report be accepted as reported.

Seconded by Don S. Approved, Unanimous.

5. Membership Report. Report by Floyd S. Total 49 members (2 Life, 1 Hon., 46 regular). Member Don S. moves that the Membership report be accepted as reported. Seconded by Member Barry E. Accepted, Unanimous.

6. Correspondence: None

7. Announcements: None

8. Old Business.

- Alan M. re-booking Victor Taboika collection tour. Potentially in September.

9. New Business:

- Legion 264 - 2 new medals. A 150th anniversary of Canada commemorative medal to be issued for wear in 2017 and a 100th anniversary commemorative medal of Newfoundland Regiment at Beaumont Hamel.

10. Break

11. Show and Tell:

Floyd S. - WWII 1944 dated beret UK Seaforth Highlander attached to RCMC, grandfathers WW1 rank badges, Carlton & York bullion cap badge.

Kevin R. - Presentation engraved Henry rifle (model 1860, #12730) to Canadian Navy Lt Alex Macgregor. Presented in Toronto Aug 28, 1866.

Dave G. - Framed 192 Battalion CEF cap & collar badges.

Barry E. - Artefact collection for P. Millis of the 13th CMR including discharge papers, WWI medals with GIV letter for PPCLI service, miniature medals, pay book and storage box.

Dave S. - Discusses Hugh M. Bondie, renowned repro badge maker, most 1 piece cast.

Alan R. - Indra's framed Canadian Army in WWII display, 1-2-3 Infantry & 1-2 Armoured Divisions including medal cap-collar-shoulder badges and cloth shoulder patches.

Dave L. - Discusses father service in Italy WWII, German Explosive switch box.

Bob M. - Selection of medals, WWII Non Vichy French medals, De Gaulle designs, E German and Belgian MIDS.

Neil P. - 1940 book, Adolf in Blunderland by Frederick Muller. Alice in Wonderland parody.

Garry M. - Discusses work on his novel, family related historical fiction, 5 coins - 1806-1820, 2

Upper Canada penny & 3 ½ penny.

12. Adjournment:

President Kevin R. calls for motion to adjourn. Member Herb J. moves for adjournment. Seconded by Barry E. Approved, Unanimous.

Meeting Adjourned. 20:22



Illustration of the submarine with its bow-mounted spar torpedo.

THE MYSTERY CONTINUES. Detailed examinations of the well-preserved remains of the crew looked for the tiniest of fractures or evidence of concussion. "We did not find any unhealed injuries to their skeletons," says Scafuri, the Hunley Project archeologist. The team is still gathering and analyzing data on the physics and effects of the detonation on the Hunley and its doomed crew, he says. It also continues to analyze the source of holes in the hull, possibly from battle damage or exposure to currents and underwater conditions. The discovery of the remains put down the old rumors. "They didn't know whether these guys had escaped and tried to swim to shore," genealogist Abrams says of the Hunley crew. "Or whether they had been taken captive. There was no concrete knowledge they were still inside."

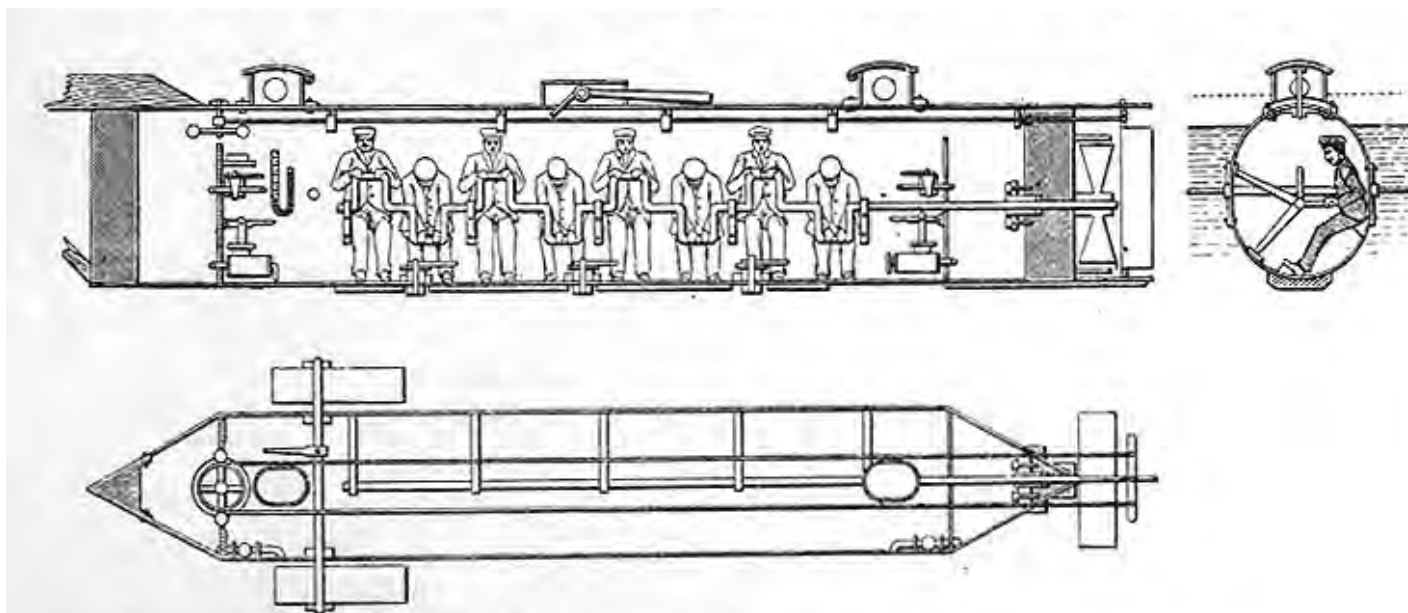


Fig. 175 à 177. — Le *David* de Hunley reconstitué d'après les dessins de M. William-A. Alexander (1863).

After the Hunley was raised in 2000, a special conservation lab was built in North Charleston. There, the process of preserving and studying the boat, with help from, among others, the Navy and the Smithsonian Institution, has been underway. Within the last year, Clemson's conservators have painstakingly chiseled away 1,200 pounds of rock-hard concretion, being careful not to damage the cast and wrought iron underneath. The removal of the encrustation allows experts to get at the hull and start removing the salts that help corrode the metal. The Hunley may be viewed during tours at the **Warren Lasch Conservation Center** in Charleston.

On April 17, 2004 the remains of the crew were laid to rest at **Magnolia Cemetery** in Charleston, South Carolina. Tens of thousands of people attended including some 6,000 reenactors and 4,000 civilians wearing period clothing. Color guards from all five branches of the U.S. armed forces—wearing modern uniforms—were also in the procession

The Crew

Dixon, Lt George - Commanding Officer
 Becker, Arnold - Seaman
 Carlsen, J.F. - Seaman
 Collins, Frank - Seaman
 Miller, Augustus - Seaman
 Ridgeway, Joseph - Seaman
 Simkins (Lumpkin?), C. - Seaman
 Wicks, James A. - Seaman

"Dream Of The Drowned Submariner By Mark Knopfler

"We run along easy at periscope depth
 Sun dappling through clear water
 So went the dream of the drowned submariner
 Far away from the slaughter

Your hair is a strawflower that sings in the sun
 My darling, my beautiful daughter
 So went the dream of the drowned submariner
 Cast away on the water

From down in the vault, down in the grave
 Reaching up to the light on the waves

So she did run to him over the grass
 She fell in his arms and he caught her
 So went the dream of the drowned submariner
 Far away on the water
 Far away on the water