

NUCLEAR SUBMARINE S S B N - 658
MARIANO G. VALLEJO



506 TH SHIP BUILT AT MARE ISLAND NSY.
VALLEJO, CALIFORNIA.

THE SHIP

With the keel laying of the MARIANO G. VALLEJO (SSBN 658), this will be the twelfth nuclear-powered and seventh Polaris submarine to be built at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard.

The LAFAYETTE Class Polaris submarines are 425 feet long, are torpedo-armed in addition to their 16 missile tubes, and displace in excess of 7,000 tons. They are equipped to accommodate all the three generations of Polaris missiles—A-1, A-2 and A-3.



This commemorative medal is sponsored by the Exchange Club of Vallejo.

President—Ed James; Vice President and Chairman—Joe Scicchitano; Treasurer—Al Schmall; Committee—Ray Bailey, Bill Taylor, Lee Gile, Harry Policar, George Cleveland, Jack Flynn.



COMMEMORATIVE
MEDAL

GENERAL MARIANO G.

Vallejo

1965



NUCLEAR POWER

Submarine

SSBN 658

GENERAL MARIANO G. VALLEJO

Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo was born in Monterey July 7, 1807, son of Don Ignacio Vallejo, a highly-respected citizen of New Spain, and Maria Antonia Lugo Vallejo. He was the eighth child of thirteen. It was his parents wish that he should know more about every activity of the Spanish of California than any other man and nothing was left undone to give him the best education the period afforded.

On January 8, 1824 Vallejo entered the military forces as a cadet in the Monterey Company for the purpose of studying to become an officer in the army.

Mariano G. Vallejo was not only one of the most colorful figures, but one of the most prominent men brought forth during the turbulent pioneer days of California history. He served faithfully as an official, either in the military, diplomatic or political fields of three nations in California and was a citizen of four such countries all of which exercised dominion over California during the life of the General.

In 1832 General Vallejo was married to the former Francisca Benicia Carrillo and their home was in and near Sonoma. They were the parents of sixteen children and mention is made of several adopted ones.

Then began his long military and administrative reign over the northern part of the California territory. In 1834 he was granted the Petaluma Ranch of 44,000 acres, which was later increased to about 150,000 acres. He was the Mexican official designated to deal officially with John Sutter and with the Russians who were in settlement at Fort Ross.

He founded the City of Sonoma in 1835. He engaged in several difficult Indian campaigns. In 1843 he was granted the Soscol Rancho of some 88,000 acres, which included Southern Napa County and southwest Solano County, embracing the Green Valley and Benicia areas.

Vallejo always possessed an admiration and sincere friendship for the Americans, and received them kindly, even when his superiors demanded the expulsion of the dangerous foreigners. Though his patriotism to Mexico was never doubted, he counseled annexation to the United States when he saw that Mexico had no government capable of protecting California from the possibility of European intervention.

On June 14, 1846, in Sonoma, he was captured by the Bear Flag party, and under order of Captain Fremont held prisoner in Sutter's Fort for about two months, when he was released to the U.S. authorities.

Later in 1846, in partnership with Robert Semple,

and later T. O. Larkin, he devised the plan for building a new city on the Straits of Carquinez, deeding the land therefor. The town was to be named Francisca in honor of Vallejo's wife, though it was later called Benicia, her middle name.

In 1849 General Vallejo was a member of the Constitutional Convention which framed the first Constitution of California. In 1850 he was elected a member of the first State Senate. A year later he formed a brilliant plan to make the City of Vallejo—which he was then founding—the permanent capital of California. Unforeseen difficulties arose which frustrated this plan, even though the legislature did meet here, briefly, on two occasions. It was Vallejo who suggested that the new city be called "Eureka," but the legislators acted otherwise by naming it in the General's honor.

In 1852, after his extensive vineyards were well established, Vallejo began the construction of the house in which he was to spend his last days. It was a mansion, with materials from many parts of the world, located near a hillside spring, he named the home Lachryma Montis, and it is now an important State Historical Monument and is visited by tens of thousands annually.

Here in the midst of luxurious surroundings the later years of General Vallejo were passed quietly, although his services were constantly sought in public and welfare measures. Here, on January 18, 1890, at the age of 82, he passed away. Although once a man of great wealth, he died a poor man. His great generosity to his friends and adverse decisions on land grant titles were largely responsible for this decline.

General Vallejo's name has been mentioned in almost every book of history dealing with early California development. His name appears everywhere—streets, a city, streamers, people, and now a Polaris submarine (SSBN 658).

THE KEEL LAYING

No ship ever built at Mare Island Naval Shipyard got off to a more auspicious start than the Polaris sub Mariano G. Vallejo.

Mare Island's 506th ship had all the color, pagentry and suspense of an American Fourth of July, a Mexican Fiesta and a space flight launch at Cape Kennedy rolled in to one big celebration.

Even the President of the United States took an active part in the ceremonies by activating the actual keel laying by pressing a button in the White House to set in operation a mysterious "black box" that released a red hot brand which burned the famous "LBJ" monogram into the keel plate of the submarine.

By a direct telephone line from the White House

on the building ways at Mare Island, where the rites were held, President Lyndon B. Johnson sent his personal greetings, dedicating the sub to a mission of peace and to the courage of the great Mexican-American soldier and statesman, Gen. Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, for whom the ship is named.

The President's brief address marked the climactic moment of the two hour program which was timed to bring Johnson's voice to the 5,000 spectators gathered for the rites at the exact moment of the actual keel laying.

The time had been set for precisely 3:15 p.m. and as the ceremonies neared the big moment, Eddie Martinez, master mechanic of the service groups, kept the White House in Washington informed of the program's progress over a special telephone installed at the keel section of the sub.

The official keel laying party waited for the signal to begin, Mr. Martinez reported to Washington all was in readiness. The time was 3:17 p.m.

A hush fell on the crowd. Abruptly Martinez covered the mouthpiece of his phone with his hand and to Rear Adm. Edward J. Fahy, USN, shipyard commander in charge of the keel authentication rites, said:

"They can't find the President!"

Seconds later, Martinez reported: "He's coming in now. He's ready to start."

Martinez no sooner had spoken when Admiral Fahy grabbed the microphone and announced to the waiting throng: "The next voice you will hear, ladies and gentlemen, will be the President of the United States!"

Immediately the loudspeakers carried the slow, measured voice that unmistakably was that of the President.

His words came in sharp and clear, ever so slightly echoing in the cavernous building ways on which the keel section rested.

"... "With this new Polaris submarine, we honor a great American hero," the President said. "As a soldier and as a statesman, General Vallejo was one of the first of the long line of courageous Mexican-Americans who have fought so bravely for freedom and worked so tirelessly for peace . . .

"... In honoring him we also honor the citizens of your city."

The Vallejo is the only ship in the history of the U. S. Navy to have been branded at its keel laying by a President of the United States.

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P. O. BOX 61 — VALLEJO, CALIFORNIA 94591

Date _____
Find enclosed MONEY ORDER for which please ship to the undersigned the number of
MARIANO G. VALLEJO MEDALS (include 15c postage)

NUMBER OF MEDALS

KIND OF MEDAL

TOTAL

_____ Golden Bronze

_____ Antique Bronze

_____ Sterling Silver (Serially numbered)

\$ 1.25 ea.

\$ 3.00 ea.

\$10.00 ea.

Total Money Order Enclosed \$ _____

Signed _____ Address _____

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PRESIDENT'S TEXT

This is the text of President Lyndon B. Johnson's message that he gave personally by telephone to the persons gathered at the keel laying of the USS Mariano G. Vallejo.

"Citizens of Vallejo:

While I cannot be with you, I am proud to participate in this way in these unique and historic ceremonies.

With this new Polaris submarine, we honor a great American hero. Like so many of our nation's heroes, his is a name of Mexican ancestry.

As a soldier and as a statesman, General Vallejo was one of the first of the long line of courageous Mexican-Americans who have fought so bravely for freedom and worked so tirelessly for peace.

In honoring him we also honor the citizens of your city which bears his name. For 111 years, you have built more than 500 vessels to fulfill the Mare Island slogan, "Our Sole Mission Is to Serve the Fleet."

I am sure that in building the Vallejo you will surpass all your own past records.

The mission of this vessel will be a mission of peace.

We today live in peace with our good neighbor and friend, the Republic of Mexico. We of America work for a world in which all men of all lands may live side by side without fear, without suspicion, without war.

To that goal, we dedicate this vessel now."

Some famous names and ship types are included in that record: the USS CALIFORNIA, only dreadnaught type battleship ever launched in the Pacific Area; the cruisers SAN FRANCISCO and CHICAGO of World War II fame; the USS LANGLEY, the Navy's first aircraft carrier (built originally here as the USS JUPITER); destroyers, scores of submarines, and a host of other types. This "Long Line of Ships" (as the title to Mare Islands history terms it) includes many which were the first of their class, prototypes for the shipyards of the nation, or others produced in production line fashion. Add to this, also, the little unique assignments which demand and demonstrate the versatility and skill of this great industrial plant, such as last year's building of the bathyscape TRIESTE II to plumb the ocean depths.