

DECOMMISSIONING CEREMONY



USS FINBACK (SSN 670)

**Puget Sound Naval Shipyard
Bremerton, Washington**

March 1997

USS FINBACK (SSN 670)

Keel Laid	26 June 1967
Launched	7 December 1968
Commissioned	4 February 1970
Length	292 feet
Beam	32 feet
Maximum Speed	>25 knots
Maximum Depth	>800 feet
Submerged Displacement	4800 tons

SHIP'S COMPLEMENT

15 officers
131 enlisted

USS FINBACK (SSN 670) HISTORY

The first FINBACK (SS 230) was the last GATO class submarine, commissioned on 31 January 1942. A distinguished battle record from 12 war patrols earned her nine battle stars. She is credited with over 92,000 tons of enemy shipping sunk and the rescue of five Naval aviators, including future President of the United States, George Bush.

The current ship to bear the name FINBACK is a STURGEON class fast attack submarine. Built by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company in Newport News, Virginia, she was christened by Mrs. Norma Baird on 7 December 1968, the first ship to be launched on that date since World War II.

Over her 27 years of commissioned service, FINBACK protected the interests of the United States and provided support for her allies. She made seven Mediterranean deployments, nine North Atlantic deployments, and participated in various exercises in the Atlantic and Caribbean. In 1984, FINBACK participated in a ceremony commemorating the 40th anniversary of the rescue of Vice President George Bush on September 2, 1944. In January 1991, FINBACK deployed to the Mediterranean to play an integral role in support of OPERATION DESERT STORM. FINBACK, an important player in the development and validation of tactics, was the first submarine configured as a mother ship for the Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle. From her first deployment and Navy Unit Commendation to her last deployment and Navy Unit Commendation, FINBACK carried forward the proud tradition of her namesake, staying on the "pointy tip of the spear." FINBACK steamed over three quarters of a million miles during her lifetime.

FINBACK was awarded four Navy Unit Commendations and two Meritorious Unit Commendations.

USS FINBACK takes her name from a group of widely distributed species of whales belonging to the genus Balaentropa. The bodies of these whales are slender and elongated, ranging from 60 to 80 feet in length. A 70 foot Finback weighs as much as 130,000 pounds. These whales may be more than 20 feet at birth and have a life expectancy of 20 years. The Finback has a well developed dorsal fin placed two-thirds of the distance from head to the flukes, and a characteristic series of longitudinal folds in the throat region. It is from the dorsal fin that the Finback whale gets its name. Finbacks are the fastest swimming of the whales reaching speeds of 30 miles an hour.

