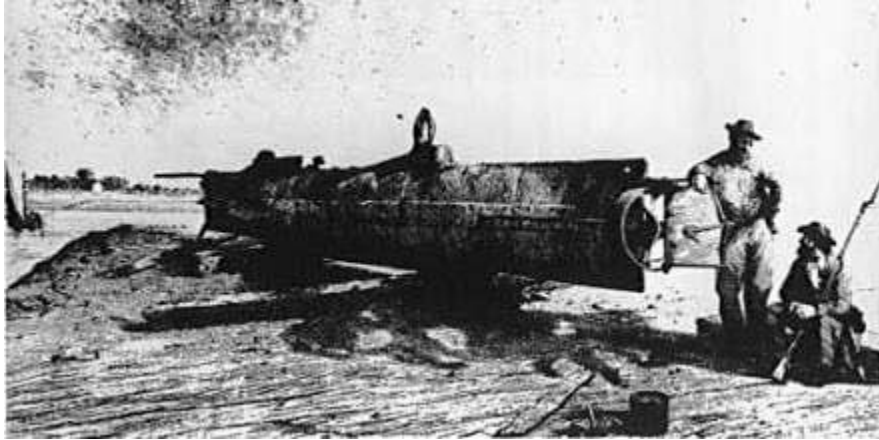


## Confederate submarine comes home

Article written by Bob Kreiling Story; Photos by Michael Mikutaitis

The nine members of the *Hunley*'s crew came home Aug. 8, more than 135 years after becoming the first submarine to sink and enemy ship.

The Confederate submarine *H. L. Hunley* and its crew went down in 1864 after ramming a spar filled with black powder into the *Housatonic*, a union vessel blockading Charleston, S.C., during the Civil War.



*Painting of the CSS Hunley by Conrad Wise Chapman,  
Courtesy of the Museum of the Confederacy*



*A tug tows the CSS Hunley up the Cooper River.*

Divers placed slings around the *Hunley* in about 30 feet of water. A crane lifted the little submarine on to a barge. The *Hunley* was taken into Charleston where researchers hope to learn why the hand-cranked vessel, made from locomotive boilers, never returned from its mission.

Members of Team Coast Guard were on duty for the event that drew national TV coverage, thousands of spectators on shore and a estimated 300 boats crowding around the scene.

## Flotillas Assist in the Recovery of the *Hunley* on August 8, 2000

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"I don't think I had any real emotions about the raising of the *Hunley* until I read about the numbers and kinds of salutes that would welcome her back to Charleston," Michael J. Mikutaitis said. "That thought brought a lump to my throat. Until that time it was a mission involving Team Coast Guard." He was among the 29 Auxiliarists manning eight boats on duty that day.



*Auxiliary Flotilla 06 patrol boat keeps pleasure craft out of the moving security zone. Aboard are Coxswain George O'Brien and crew Larry Moran, Maggie McCarty, and Arlene Southerland*

The minute the superstructure broke the surface, Confederate re-enactors fired a cannon volley. Sea Cadets waved blue-lens lantern, similar to one the *Hunley* crew used to signal it has sunk the *Housatonic*, to guide the ill-fated submarine back to shore. The crowd cheered and waved flags. A bugler played taps. Ministers blessed the sub and the remains of its crew, the third to die aboard the *Hunley*.

"I was excited about being a part of this historic event, " said Mikutaitis. "Recent events in this state over the Confederate flag had me worried that a solemn occasion such as this might be marred by a stupid act. I was relieved that the spectators were well behaved."

"Planning sessions between Coast Guard Group Charleston, the Auxiliary and various state, county and city law enforcement agencies resulted in a flawless performance," said Robert L. Kreiling, Division 12 Staff Officer - Operations. A 500-yard secured area, marked by buoys, surrounded the two barges. The Auxiliary and the law enforcement boats maintained spectator control of the more than 300 sailboats, kayaks and other pleasure craft that crowded the area at a safe distance while workers raised the *Hunley*.

Auxiliarists and their boats came from three units of District 7, Division 12. Flotilla 12-3 (Lake Murray) provided 16 members and towed two boats 130 miles to Charleston. Flotilla 12-6 (Mt. Pleasant) contributed one boat with Coxswain and three crew. Flotilla 12-08 (Charleston) provided five boats and nine members. While the flotillas in Division 12 are widely separated, with the aid of E-mail and fax, all were well briefed prior to an Aug. 7 "face to face" dinner meeting in Charleston.



*A dinner/operations briefing for members of Flotilla 03. From the left are Jim Smith, Al Morgan, Ellen Kreiling (Division 12 Vice Captain), Bob Kreiling (Division 12 Operations officer, standing), Dick Clarke (Flotilla Commander 12-8 Charleston), Kent McCain and Joe Lavelle.*



*The Karlissa B, the jack-up barge has raised the Hunley and will lower her onto the barge. The barge on the right was used as a breakwater.*

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' flagship, *Wildlife 1*, led, with a tug towing the barge and one aft for control. Directly behind was the CGC *Yellowfin*. The law enforcement and Auxiliary boats were on both sides forming a moving box as a means of spectator control. As the procession approached Charleston and moved through the harbor, the other Auxiliarist in their assigned patrol areas, joined in and added to the box formation.

"The procession made it's way past the Battery, the Marine Center, the Aquarium and over toward the aircraft carrier *Yorktown*. The twisting and turning in the river entailed a great deal of maneuvering by the tugs and often required the spectator fleets' cooperation,

which they readily gave," Kreiling said. "Indeed it was truly a wonderful day to be in Charleston! Everyone on our boat was surprised when I told them that we had been out over seven hours - it was that exciting to have had the pleasure of being part of such an historic event!"



*Coxswain Jim Smith and crew Dave Beaudrot and Lee Mims on patrol*

Auxiliarists participating were, from Flotilla 12-03 (Two boats) Joe Richbourg, Edward Jones, Donnie Hare Jr, George Crouch III, Michael Mikutaitis, Dale McCoin, Kent McCoin, Albert Morgan, Robert Alexander, Gerald Ruschkofski, Ken Uschelbec, James Schneider, James Smith, Bobby Buscher, Adrienne Thompson and William Kelly Jr. From Flotilla 12-06 (One boat) George O'Brien, Larry Moran, Maggie McCarty and Arlene Southerland. From Flotilla 12-08 (Five boats) Dave Beaudrot, Dick Clarke, Dan Cowley, Dean Creed, Bob Kreiling, Ellen Kreiling, Joe Lavelle, Mark Ratliff and John Rodgers.

"I was duly impressed that so many agencies were able to come together as a team," Mikutaitis said. "I think the different flotillas of the Coast Guard Auxiliary in South Carolina demonstrated that when called upon to do a job, they can do it in a Team Coast Guard fashion."

The expedition to raise the *Hunley* began in May. Conservation of the submarine is expected to take about seven years. It will then go on display at the Charleston museum.

To learn more about the CSS *Hunley* and the efforts to raise her, including a detailed explanation and animation, click on the Friends of the *Hunley* icon or go to [www.hunley.org/new/main\\_nav.htm](http://www.hunley.org/new/main_nav.htm)