

Angel's

*Be Alive!*Angel Gomez,  
Director of  
Member  
Services**(5)** Bunk beds on the submarine are stacked three-high.**(1)** Entrance to the Submarine, adjacent to the World Famous Queen Mary**Hello again, everybody.  
Happy summer!**

This month, we're going someplace unusual – under the sea! Normally, *Be Alive!* takes us high in the hills. But for this month, we're going in the other direction. It's all good!

Did you know there's a Russian attack submarine – right there in Long Beach? There is.

I have always wondered what the inside of a submarine looks like, and how big the inside really is. Sure, I have seen plenty of movies with submarines, but how many of you have ever been on a real submarine? **(1)**

Oh, wait a minute, my boss, Club CEO John Hawkins just said that he spent four years on an American submarine. Well, he was in the Navy, and I was in the Marines. That explains a few things!

**John Hawkins:** *Angel's right! I spent four years (1983 to 1987) on the fast-attack sub USS Salt Lake City (SSN-716). She was a 688-foot Los Angeles Class that spent most of her time tracking the Soviet's ballistic missile subs during the Cold War, while at the same time trying to avoid being detected by subs like this one, the Scorpion. Taking the tour of the Scorpion really brought back fond, and not so fond, memories of my tour of duty; and it reminded me of how fascinating submarines really are.*

Off to the submarine we go. This Russian sub is next to the *Queen Mary*. The *Scorpion* b-427 is open to the public daily, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day. Admission price for adults is \$10.95; children (5-11),

\$9.95; under 5 are free; seniors (55-plus), \$9.95; and lastly, if you are in the military (with ID), \$9.95. There are also combination tickets sold that include the *Scorpion*, the *Queen Mary* guided tours, and the "Ghosts and Legends" special effects show. Those prices are: adults, \$32.95; senior/military, \$28.95; and children, \$19.95.

Wow! It was a real surprise to see how small the submarine walking and living areas were; I thought you would have a lot more room.

**History:**

The Soviet-designated "Project 641" diesel electric attack submarine, known to NATO as the Foxtrot Class, was one of the most successful classes of submarines ever in service to the Soviet Navy. Seventy-nine Foxtrots were built by the Soviet Union, the second largest class of submarines ever built by them. The b-427, code-named "*Scorpion*," was one of their best! **(2)**

Built at the Sudomekh Shipyards outside Leningrad (St. Petersburg), the keel for b-427 was laid down in 1971. She was completed and commissioned into the Soviet Navy in 1972. At that time, *Scorpion* was fitted with all the latest developments in engines, sonar, radar and weaponry. She was indeed "state of art" and truly the pride of the Soviet Navy's undersea fleet! **(3)**

Assigned to the headquarters of the powerful Soviet Pacific Fleet, based in Vladivostok, and manned by a full complement of 56 sailors, 10 midshipmen and 12 officers, *Scorpion* sailed out on its maiden voyage into the North Sea where she then turned south for her secret journey down the coast of Europe and Africa, rounding the Cape of Good Hope and then into the Indian Ocean. From there she sailed up the coast of Viet Nam, then patrolled and monitored the US Navy, through the Sea of Japan and finally to her new home port, Vladivostok. **(4)**

For the next 22 years, the *Scorpion's* missions were shrouded in secrecy and remain so to this day. As one of the quietest submarines in the Soviet fleet, it is known that Foxtrots were extensively used for surveillance of United States Navy battle groups as well as electronic surveillance of all types.

Although intrusions into North American territorial waters were officially forbidden, we do know that both sides in the Cold War considered submarines as the perfect espionage tool, and rumors of such incursions persist to this very day. **(5)**

We also know that the Vladivostok Submarine Squadron was regularly tasked with patrolling the Indian and Arctic Oceans, the Sea of Japan and the Pacific Ocean as far east as the North American territorial waters. After the end of the conflict in Viet Nam, elements of the Soviet Pacific Submarine Fleet were

#139489

# Russian Attack Submarine | In Long Beach Next to the Queen Mary

also assigned to a new base in Viet Nam, and it is likely that *Scorpion* spent some time on assignment there as well.

It is a real tribute to the submarine forces of both sides in the Cold War that, despite their dangerous proximity to each other for more than 40 years, neither side actually fired a shot in anger. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the ability and need for the Russian Federation to field the world's largest fleet of submarines vanished. In 1994, *Scorpion* was decommissioned and ended her 22-year career as a Cold War warrior, replaced by the next generation of Russian Diesel Attack Submarines, known by NATO as the Kilo Class.

In 1995, after long and difficult negotiations, *Scorpion* was purchased by a group of private businessmen, and with the help of the Russian Navy was taken to Sydney, Australia, for display at the National Maritime Museum. Three years later, she was brought to Long Beach, where she now proudly stands as a monument to all the brave submarine crews of all sides in the Cold War who went to sea in "sharks of steel" and served their countries with honor.

## Tidbits:

With everything you can see and explore on the *Scorpion*, there is also a submarine store next to it. You can go inside and buy bank notes from the Soviet Union, coins with a certificate of

authenticity, some really neat Vodka flasks, and also a Russian AK-47 bayonet. Yikes! **(6)**

The *Scorpion* is a movie star in its own right, having been featured in many films, TV shows, commercials and documentaries. The *Scorpion* has appeared as a Russian, American, German and even a Japanese submarine. **(7)**

Well, thanks again for always stopping by and reading my small section on outdoor and indoor activities.

**Until next time,  
be safe and Be Alive!**

— Angel

## Directions:

From downtown, take the I-5 south, and merge onto the I-710 south toward Long Beach. Take the exit toward Piers F-J/Queen Mary. Then, merge onto South Harbor Scenic Drive. Take Harbor Plaza toward Queensway Dr./Pier H/Queensway Bay. Turn right onto the ramp; turn slightly left onto Queens Highway. Your destination is 1126 Queens Highway, Long Beach, 90802-6331.

Another option is take the 110 south to the 405 south and merge with the 710 south and follow the directions above.

Phone: (562) 432-0424



## Submarine Facts:

**RUSSIAN DESIGNATOR:** Project 641

**NATO DESIGNATOR:** Foxtrot-Class

**MANUFACTURER'S NUMBER:** b-427

**BUILT:** 1972

**DECOMMISSIONED:** 1994

**LENGTH:** 299 feet, 6 inches

**BEAM:** 24 feet, 7 inches

**DRAFT:** 20 feet

**DISPLACEMENT:** 1,952 tons surfaced, 2,475 tons submerged

**BUILT:** Sudomekh Shipyard, Leningrad (St. Petersburg)

**CREW:** 12 officers, 10 midshipmen, 56 seamen

**MAXIMUM DIVING DEPTH:** 985 feet

**SPEED:** 16 knots surfaced, 15 knots submerged, 9 knots snorkeling

**RANGE:** 20,000 miles surfaced at 8 knots, 11,000 miles snorkeling 380 miles submerged at 2 knots

**ENDURANCE:** 3 to 5 days submerged

**PROPULSION:** 3 diesel engines, 2,000 hp each; 3 electric motors, 2 with 1,350 hp and 1 with 2,700 hp. 1 auxiliary motor with 180 hp. Three propeller shafts, each with six-bladed propellers.

**TORPEDOES:** 22 maximum



**(2)** This is a typical hatch to go from room to room.



**(3)** Maps and plotting charts are in this very small navigation room.



**(4)** Hello? Can anyone hear me?



**(7)** In the small lunch room on the submarine.



**(6)** Inside the Submarine Store.