

**Vic Krygowski:** So I signed up for new construction in Philadelphia. And then when it came to choosing the ship that I wanted, I looked at the roster and they had names like: Escolar [SS-294], Hackleback [SS-295] – they were named after fish – Ling and the Devilfish. And the Devilfish [SS-292] sounded like more of a daring kind of a ... it sounded like it would make a good submarine picture – motion picture. [laughing] So, I chose the Devilfish and I got it. So I spent quite a few months in Philadelphia waiting for the Devilfish being completed.

But to tell you the history of the Devilfish – she was the very first keel that was laid at Cramp. Cramp was going to built these.... First of all, Cramp were excellent builders of concrete barges.

**Janis Kozlowski:** Is that C R A M P?

**Vic Krygowski:** C R A M P, yeah Shipbuilding Company. And so you wouldn't think that there would be a link between building concrete barges and submarines.

**Janis Kozlowski:** No, because they are pretty different. [both laughing]

**Vic Krygowski:** Yeah. But they worked under the auspices of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard expert who came down and were, you know, teaching them the ropes, so to speak. But the result of all of this was that they started on the Devilfish and they hit some snags. When they hit some snags they left it and they went on to the Escolar and the Hackelback and the Dragonet [SS-293] and they were working on them while they let the Devilfish linger.

In the meantime, all of the gear for the Devilfish was being brought to the piers where the submarine was being built. As a result of that we had a lot of sensitive radar gear, you know, high priced electronics, sonar gear and all of that that was sitting under leaky tarpaulins.

**Vic Krygowski:** And so, then the Navy finally got after Clamp and said, “finish the Devilfish.” So, they finally finished the Devilfish but we didn't feel too good about it especially since as we were.... Oh, first of all the Dragonet, the Hackelback and, I guess, one other – the Escolar, went out ahead of us.

So when we got ... when we rounded Panama Canal and we were heading out toward Pearl Harbor, which was going to be our base, we found out that, a) the USS Escolar was sunk, reason unknown – as it is for most submarines and, b) the USS Hackelback was limping back into port with a flooded forward torpedo room.

Due to some unexplained accident. But it didn't sink, it just got a lot of water and they were coming back for repairs. So, anyway, morale on the USS Devilfish when we got to Pearl Harbor was at very low levels because now Cramp boats began to be jinxed boats. They call submarine boats, incidentally, they are big enough to earn the title of ship, but they're really boats. Every submariner calls his ship, a boat. So they ... we found out that these two boats were gone ... well, one was gone and one was almost gone. And then people began to want to get off the Devilfish because they were jinxed ... it was a jinxed boat.