



HL HUNLEY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

H. L. Hunley Fact Sheet

- Hunley sank twice before her final voyage (three times in all) killing 21 crewmembers. The first sinking occurred while the sub was tied to her moorings and human error caused her to dive before her hatches were fastened (5 died). Second sinking happened during a practice dive (8 died). Third sinking occurred sometime after Hunley sank Housatonic, no one knows how or why (8 died).
- H.L. Hunley site has been awarded recognition on the National Register of Historic Places.
- H.L. Hunley was named after her principle financier and one of her designers, Horace Lawson Hunley. Hunley was Deputy Collector of Customs in New Orleans, as well as a wealthy lawyer and planter.
- There were rumors that after Hunley succeeded in sinking Housatonic she traveled safely to Georgetown, SC (about 40 miles north of Charleston).
- Hunley was the first submarine to sink an enemy vessel. The next sub to repeat the event was Britain's submarine E-9 when she sank the German cruiser Hela more than fifty years after Hunley's historic feat.
- William Alexander, who was intimately involved in Hunley's construction in Mobile and operations in Charleston, was issued new orders to leave his station with Dixon and crew only twelve days before Hunley's final voyage. Reports indicate that his orders were to return to Mobile to develop a repeating gun for the Confederate army.
- One of the investors in Hunley was E.C. Singer, nephew of the man who invented the sewing machine prior to the beginning of the war. Singer built the torpedo used on Hunley. It is interesting to note that a spool of rope (similar to the spools of thread used on a sewing machine) was used in the torpedo's rigging.



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- Another of Hunley's investors was Gus Whitney, relative of Eli Whitney who invented the cotton gin.
- General Pierre G.T. Beauregard's words proved to indeed be true when after the second sinking of the Hunley, he said "It's (H.L. Hunley) more dangerous to those who use it than to the enemy." Only five Union sailors were killed as a result of the Hunley sinking the Housatonic, Twenty-one men died in Hunley.
- Nicknames for H.L. Hunley included: "Peripatetic Coffin," "Porpoise," "Fish Boat," "Murdering Machine"
- Jules Verne wrote his classic novel of submarine adventure, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, only four years after Hunley's historic feat.
- Legendary showman P.T. Barnum offered \$100,000 for the recovery of the Hunley for his show.
- In an endurance test dive, the crew of the Hunley sat on the ocean bottom for two hours, thirty-five minutes without surfacing for air.
- Crewmembers reported that on test runs, Hunley would surface so near enemy ships, they could hear Union sailors singing.
- The forty-foot long Hunley was designed to be propelled by eight men and could reach a top speed of around four knots.



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-Before young George Dixon left for the war, his sweetheart gave him a \$20 gold piece for luck. When Dixon was shot in the hip at the battle of Shiloh, that gold piece caught the bullet, saving his leg and possibly his life. That coin is one of the artifacts archaeologists have found aboard the Hunley when she was excavated.

-Dr. William Dudley, Director of Naval History at the Naval Historical Center said, "The Hunley's discovery was probably the most important find of the century."

-No one knows how or why H.L. Hunley sank on February 17, 1864.