



Defender is underway in this undated photo probably from its earliest years, when it was known as Lake. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Found in the Sound

Divers discover the wreck of a submarine off Old Saybrook

Story by **JOHN RUDDY**
Graphics by **SCOTT RITTER**
Day Staff

The object shown on two marine surveys was long, cylindrical and unidentified. It wasn't the only mysterious thing on the bottom of Long Island Sound, but it was the right size and shape.

Richard Simon, a commercial diver who works out of Noank and New London, had been studying sonar and bathymetric surveys and eliminating other objects from consideration. This one appeared to be what he was looking for.

Last month, Simon and a team from his company, Shoreline Diving Services, went to a spot off Old Saybrook, and about 200 feet down they made a spectacular discovery: the wreck of a submarine.

The shape on the surveys was the remains of an experimental vessel from the early 20th century called Defender. Not a Navy boat, it was the product of a Connecticut inventor who played a role in early submarine development.

Simon Lake, who lived most of his life in Milford, was an engineer and naval architect who started making submarines in the 1890s. He held more than 200 patents and had a Bridgeport shipyard where he built 26 submarines for the Navy.

Defender wasn't one of them, but it still has a place in maritime history. Its curious story is largely about things that might have happened but didn't. Defender might have been the lead ship in a Navy submarine class. It might have been a pioneering salvage vessel. It might have sailed for the North Pole.

Simon, 35, said he had long known the obscure vessel was somewhere in the sound. Twenty years ago, he saw a list of



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undiscovered local wrecks, and Defender was the only submarine among them. Intrigued, he wanted to find it.

"We just started looking one day," he said.

After researching how the boat went down and making preparatory dives, Simon's team went out on April 14. He said they



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Top, diver Steve Abbate inspects one of Defender's propellers on April 16. **Above**, the forward hatch, like the rest of the hull, was covered by a yellow growth when the sub was discovered. **Left**, inventor Simon Lake, seen around 1923.

threw a grappling hook into the water and tried unsuccessfully to catch it on the wreck. Two days later they went back, dropping a line with a shot weight. Then two divers swam down and circled the area.

Five minutes into the search, there it was: Defender appeared in murky water, rising 12 feet

Editor's note: In addition to the sources cited, this story was drawn from "Going Deep" by Lawrence Goldstone, the files of the Submarine Force Museum and the archives of The Day.

from the bottom and resting on its port side.

The 93-foot vessel was still where it had landed 77 years ago when, long after outliving its potential, it was unceremoniously scuttled.

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Simon Lake hadn't been able to sell his submarines to the Navy like his famous rival, John Holland. Fed up after several rejections, Lake went to Europe, where he made customers of Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary.

But in 1906 he found a reason to again try his luck at home. Congress had sharply increased its appropriation for submarine construction to \$500,000. That was thanks largely to Theodore Roosevelt, who championed the undersea vessels after becoming the first president to ride in one.

From Europe, Lake decided to pursue the money. He designed a boat and, at his own expense, had it built by Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia. The vessel, eventually known as Defender, was first called Simon Lake XV, then just Lake.

When the Navy secretary ordered competitive trials, with a contract on the line, Lake was all in. His new vessel would be up against one from Electric Boat, which had not yet arrived in Groton. Before the trials, Roosevelt upped the stakes by pushing for an even higher appropriation of \$3 million.

SEE SUBMARINE PAGE A4

Nuclear waste is in limbo

Waterford still wants Millstone's gone when national issue resolved

By **KEVIN ARNOLD**
Day Staff Writer

Waterford — If it were up to the operators of the Dominion Millstone Power Station, its spent nuclear fuel would not be stored on site.

Vice President Michael O'Connor said this past week that the plant can safely store all its spent fuel on site, as it has since Millstone began operating in 1970, but he would rather see it moved elsewhere.

"It is absolutely preferred to be off-site," O'Connor said of the spent fuel.

The Millstone plant currently has 52 large concrete containers, known as dry storage casks, of spent fuel, O'Connor said, in addition to nuclear waste stored in steel-lined concrete pools. O'Connor said the 52 dry storage casks could be shipped to another location, once one is available, and that fuel from the pools is periodically moved into casks.

Approximately 100,000 tons of spent nuclear fuel has been generated from commercial nuclear power generation in the country since 1950, and it is currently stored at more than 70 sites in more than 30 states.

The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 outlines the federal government's responsibility to site, build, and operate a permanent nuclear waste storage solution.

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DeSantis in Iowa warns of GOP's 'culture of losing'

Trump event sidelined by bad weather forecast

By **THOMAS BEAUMONT**
and **MICHELLE L. PRICE**
Associated Press

Sioux Center, Iowa — Warning of a Republican "culture of losing," Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis sought Saturday to weaken former President Donald Trump's grip on the GOP as he courted voters in battleground Iowa.

DeSantis, expected to announce his 2024 presidential campaign any day, briefly flipped burgers and pork chops at a picnic fundraiser in Sioux Center that drew hundreds of conservatives to the northwest corner of the state. At the podium, he highlighted his willingness to embrace conservative cultural fights and sprinkled his remarks with indirect jabs at Trump.

"Governing is not about entertaining. Governing is not about building a brand or talking on social media and virtue signaling," said DeSantis, who wore a blue button-down shirt without a tie or jacket. "It's ultimately about winning and producing results."

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WEATHER

Today, sun, fair-weather clouds. High 67. Monday, mostly sunny and seasonable. High 68. **E6**

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NEW MENOPAUSE DRUG FOR HOT FLASHES GETS FDA NOD

Washington — U.S. health regulators on Friday approved a new type of drug for women dealing with uncomfortable hot flashes caused by menopause.

The Food and Drug Administration approved the once-a-day pill from Astellas Pharma to treat moderate-to-severe symptoms, which can include sweating, flushing and chills.

Astellas' drug, Veozah, uses a new approach, targeting brain connections that help control body temperature. The FDA said the medication will provide "an additional safe and effective treatment option for women," in a statement.

More than 80% of women experience hot flashes during menopause, the FDA noted, as the body gradually produces lower levels of reproductive hormones between the ages of 45 and 55.

— Associated Press

BOY USES SLINGSHOT TO SAVE SISTER FROM BEING ABDUCTED

Alpena, Mich. — A Michigan girl was able to escape an attempted kidnapping when her brother used a slingshot to strike the would-be attacker, authorities said this week.

Mlive.com reports that the Michigan State Police arrested the accused assailant Wednesday.

The 17-year-old's name has not been released though he has been charged as an adult with one count of attempted kidnapping/child enticement, one count of attempted assault to do great bodily harm less than murder, and one count of assault and battery.

Michigan State Police said in a news release that the 8-year-old girl was in her backyard when the alleged assailant came out of the woods, grabbed her and covered her mouth. Authorities said the girl's brother, 13, hit the alleged attacker in the head and chest using a slingshot.

— Associated Press

Eurovision wraps up



JON SUPER/AP PHOTO

Fans react to the onstage acts as they watch on a giant screen outside the venue for the finale of the Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool, England, on Saturday. See **A5**.

