

OUT OF THE DEEP

Two remarkable discoveries by Paul G. Allen and his expedition team are furthering our understanding of the early days of the Second World War

BY HOWARD CARTER

As readers of this publication well know, Microsoft co-founder and philanthropist Paul G. Allen has invested long and heavy in making sure future generations realize the importance of our Second World War generation and their sacrifice and devotion to ensure our country's freedom.

Mr. Allen and his expedition group have made two stunning new finds — both within weeks of each other. Let's examine the most recent discovery first.

USS *JUNEAU* AND THE SULLIVANS

It is quite appropriate that St. Patrick's Day, 17 March 2018, marked the discovery of the

USS *Juneau* (CL-52) off the coast of the Solomon Islands, by Paul G. Allen's expedition crew aboard the Research Vessel R/V *Petrel*. The light cruiser *Juneau* was sunk by a Japanese torpedo during the Battle of Guadalcanal and 687 Sailors would die. The ship had already been hit by one torpedo and was limping away from the area when *I-26* fired another torpedo that struck the ship's ammunition storage area. Included in that figure were all five Sullivan brothers (see *Sea Classics* September 2017).

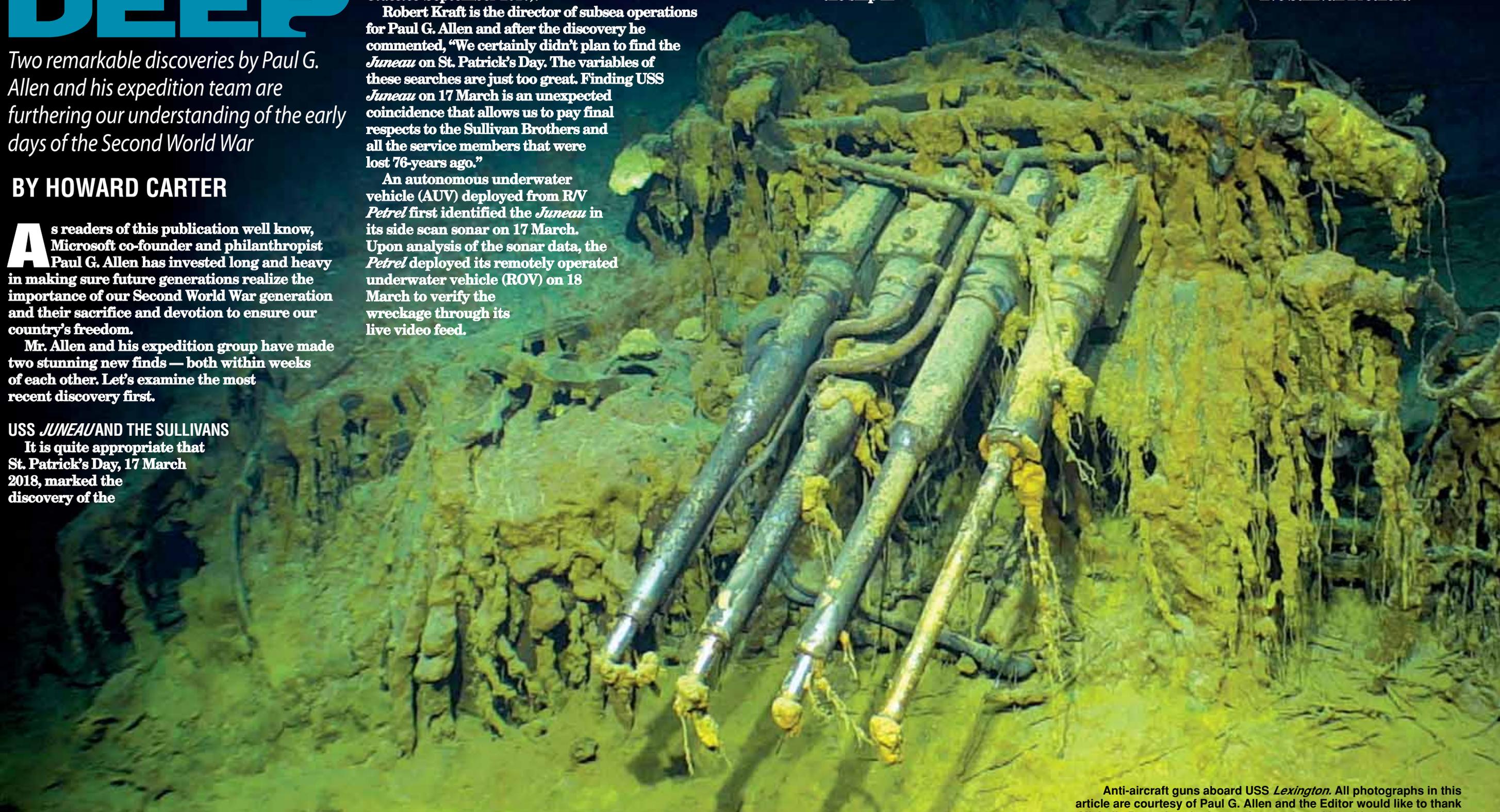
Robert Kraft is the director of subsea operations for Paul G. Allen and after the discovery he commented, "We certainly didn't plan to find the *Juneau* on St. Patrick's Day. The variables of these searches are just too great. Finding USS *Juneau* on 17 March is an unexpected coincidence that allows us to pay final respects to the Sullivan Brothers and all the service members that were lost 76-years ago."

An autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) deployed from R/V *Petrel* first identified the *Juneau* in its side scan sonar on 17 March. Upon analysis of the sonar data, the *Petrel* deployed its remotely operated underwater vehicle (ROV) on 18 March to verify the wreckage through its live video feed.

The USS *Juneau* had only commissioned less than a year prior to its sinking and its loss was a critical blow to a US Navy attempting to fight back against Japanese aggression. On 13 November 1942, during the deadly battle between American and Japanese forces, a second torpedo hit the cruiser's port side. This created a massive explosion that literally tore the ship in

half. The explosion also killed most of the Sailors on board the cruiser.

Juneau sank in just 30-seconds. The remaining American task force, worried over the risk of more Japanese attacks and the possible loss of more of the limited naval resources, did not stay to rescue survivors. It is thought that approximately 115 Sailors survived the sinking — including perhaps two of the five Sullivan Brothers.



Anti-aircraft guns aboard USS *Lexington*. All photographs in this article are courtesy of Paul G. Allen and the Editor would like to thank Michelle Donoghue for her assistance in making this article possible.