



U. S. S. GURNARD (SS-254)

Navy Day, 1945, Hunters Point, California

The UNITED STATES NAVY welcomes you aboard the U.S.S. GURNARD, one of the many UNITED STATES SUBMARINES that assisted in destroying Japanese naval and merchant power.

The following is a brief description of compartments within the ship from aft forward:

AFTER TORPEDO ROOM: This compartment contains the torpedo tubes from which torpedoes are fired, and racks in which reload torpedoes are carried. Each "fish" is more than 21 feet long and carries nearly 1,000 pounds of high explosive.

MANEUVERING ROOM: The GURNARD is driven by a diesel-electric combination. The control cubicle contained here is the heart of the electrical system. Power may be taken from the main generators and put into the motors for propulsion on the surface, from the battery for propulsion submerged, or from the generators to the battery for charging.

AFTER ENGINE ROOM: This compartment contains two 16-cylinder, V-type diesel engines. Each engine drives a main generator. Between these engines below the deck is a smaller engine-generator combination that is used when power requirements do not demand the operation of a main engine.

FORWARD ENGINE ROOM: This compartment also contains two main engines. The forward end of the room has two distilling plants that produce fresh water from salt water.

AFTER BATTERY: Contains crew's bunks, messing compartment, showers, heads, washing machine, ice-cream machine, and galley. Below the deck are located one of the two battery groups, magazine, and store rooms.

CONTROL ROOM: This is the controlling heart of the boat. On the right are banks of manifolds that distribute highly compressed air through the boat for various purposes, such as blowing of main ballast tanks for surfacing. On the left is the radio shack. In the center is the master gyro

compass and just forward is the steering station. On the port side are the bow and stern plane diving stations and the hydraulic manifold. The CONNING TOWER is directly overhead. Discussion of this compartment is prohibited for security reasons.

FORWARD BATTERY: Ship's office, chief petty officers' quarters, commanding officer's stateroom, officers' quarters and wardroom, wardroom pantry and a shower are contained in this compartment. Below the deck is the other battery group.

FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM: Here are more torpedo tubes and racks and bunks for berthing of the crew. Also in this compartment is the forward escape hatch designed to facilitate emergency escape from the boat when surfacing is impossible.

The following Officers and Chief Petty Officers are attached to the ship

Lt.- Comdr. G. S. Simmons, III, USN Commanding	San Francisco, Cal.
Lieutenant A. E. May, USN, Executive Officer	Pasadena Cal.
Lieutenant W. O. Burwell, USNR, 1st Lieutenant	Pittsford N. Y.
Lieut. (jg), E. L. Eeds, USNR Engineering and Diving	Beeville, Texas
Lieut. (jg), T. L. Rittenhouse, USNR, Torpedo and Gunnery	East Stroudsburg, Penn.
Lieut. (jg) B. W. Stoddard, USNR, Radar	Boise, Idaho
Lieut. (jg), W. L. Siple, USN, Communications	Cherokee, Ia.
Lieut. (jg) R. T. Kramer, USNR, Elect. and Commissary	Batavia, N. Y.

CHIEFS

H. D. Buchheim, Chief Motor Machinist's Mate, USN	West Australia
B. E. Buell, Chief Motor Machinist's Mate, USN	No. Little Rock, Ark.
G. T. Gall, Chief Motor Machinist's Mate, USN	San Diego, Calif.
F. J. Mele, Chief Torpedoman's Mate, USN	Queen's Village, L. I. N. Y.
J. Middleton, Chief Pharmacist's Mate, USN	Hot Springs New Mexico

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE U.S.S. GURNARD

The GURNARD was built in New London, Connecticut and was commissioned on 18 September 1942. She is approximately 309 feet long, 27 feet wide and displaces 1800 tons fully loaded. The GURNARD has made nine war patrols in the following areas: Bay of Biscay off the coast of Spain, Pacific Ocean in the vicinity of the Island of Palau, South China Sea, Southeast coast on Honshu, Celebes Sea, and South China Sea.

The GURNARD is credited with sinking 76,479 tons of Japanese shipping and damaging 116,182 tons for a total number of 14 ships sunk and 10 damaged. Among the ships damaged were an aircraft carrier and a battleship.

Below are a few excerpts of interest taken from the history of this vessel:

On 6 July 1943, USS GURNARD, after taking the first round from the Japs a few days before by sinking two freighters and getting four torpedoes into a carrier, was almost dealt a surprise KO by a destroyer-bomber team off Palau Island. The Jap plane laid a bomb alongside the GURNARD as she was coming up for a look, jamming the diving planes and blowing the ship almost to the surface in the path of the destroyer. Only by flooding all tanks and sending all hands forward was the GURNARD able to avoid broaching, and now with tons of extra water in her tanks, she sank like a rock, with no control of her rudder planes. All hands were rushed aft, tanks blown, and control of the stern planes regained by a quick-thinking electrician's mate with the aid of a toothbrush, but not before the ship had gone far beyond its test depth.

Another close scrape occurred when the GURNARD was hunting close to the Honshu coast on the night of December 23, 1943. She stopped a Nazi blockade runner, but before she could witness the sinking, picked up a convoy coming down the coast. While chasing these ships one-half mile from the beach, the Commanding Officer noticed a flashlight on the stern of the ship dead ahead. On a hunch, he veered hard left, and a moment later the night sky was illuminated by a flash and the ship rocked by the tremendous explosion of a depth charge which had been rolled off squarley in the path of the GURNARD, had she not made her full speed turn. The GURNARD on the next day sank two freighters in six minutes and was pounded with depth charges until late Christmas Eve. Christmas festivities proved a welcome rest, but the night of December 27th, she invaded a 10-destroyer screen on the surface to put two of her last four torpedoes into a large, high-speed transport.

On May 6, 1944, the GURNARD performed the unusual feat of sinking four Jap ships with a single 6-torpedo salvo, in a submerged attack north of the Celebes, though one of these, burning furiously, had to be speeded to the bottom by gunfire and an additional torpedo that night.

On the same patrol, the GURNARD caught a Nagato-class battleship attempting to run out of Davao harbor under cover of a rain squall. A quick set-up on the target resulted in two hits out of a 6-torpedo salvo. More hits might have been obtained had not an escorting destroyer passed close aboard in front of the periscope at the moment of firing and completely blanked the target from view. But as a result of this attack, the Japs had one less battleship available for the defense of Saipan.

AMUSING INCIDENTS

On her last patrol in April 1943, the GURNARD was having her picture taken by a Army Liberator off the coast of French Indo-China and the plane and sub were complaining to each other by radio of the

scarcity of targets. Suddenly one of the GURNARD'S lookouts spied a Jap Zero sneaking in astern close to the water. The Liberator pilot was immediately notified and went after the Jap, while the GURNARD prepared to dive. This was unnecessary though, as the Jap changed his mind with such speed that the Liberator lost sight of him before he (the Liberator) could get fully turned around.

On August 30, 1944 the GURNARD, returning from an uneventful patrol, decided to board and investigate numerous sailboats crossing Macassar Strait from Borneo to the Celebes. Her first quarry was given a warning shot across the bow to get them to heave to and lower sail. Instead all hands topside jumped overboard and clung to the gunwhales and the rudder and the sailboat went out of control running across the GURNARD'S bow. A hole was stove into the boat's side and in a few minutes she sank and a total of 14 Malays were struggling in the water attempting to keep all their worldly possessions afloat. The GURNARD'S crew helped them aboard and with 14 unwanted prisoners on deck, the Commanding Officer was contemplating his embarrassing position if a Jap plane came along. Fortunately, another sailboat was soon located and all prisoners transferred, together with some food and cigarettes.

