

HISTORY OF USS MUSKALLUNGE (SS-262)

USS MUSKALLUNGE (SS-262), first ship of the Fleet to bear the name, was built by the Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut. Her keel was laid, 7 April 1942, and on 13 December 1942, she was launched under the sponsorship of Mrs. Anna C. Graham, widow of Chief Torpedoman Merritt D. Graham, USN, who was a crew member of USS GRUNION (SS-216), lost due to enemy action in the Pacific during July 1942.

MUSKALLUNGE was placed in commission at New London, Connecticut, on 15 March 1943, when Lieutenant Commander Willard A. Saunders, USN, assumed command. She conducted extensive shakedown training operations in local operating areas of New London, including six weeks at Newport, Rhode Island, where she test fired several hundred electric torpedoes. On 10 July 1943, she departed New London, enroute to the Pacific and on 7 August arrived at Pearl Harbor.

MUSKALLUNGE departed Pearl Harbor on 7 September 1943 to conduct her first war patrol in waters off Palau. She carried the first electric torpedo to be fired in the war by an American submarine. Her first attack was a night-surface action against a convoy of four freighters under escort of a heavy destroyer and four smaller patrol vessels. After an undetected approach, she fired six electric torpedoes but two exploded prematurely close aboard, the shock causing the engines to stop and forcing MUSKALLUNGE to dive. As she passed a depth of 75 feet, a close salvo of depth charges were dropped and exploded close but resulted in no serious damage. Her second attack on the enemy was conducted several days later with similar results. This time one of her torpedoes exploded close under her bow, knocking down the crew in the forward torpedo room. In these two attacks she scored a hit on a passenger freighter, and one on a freighter for unconfirmed damage. She returned to Pearl Harbor for refit on 25 October 1943. During refit, Commander Michael P. Russillo, USN, relieved Lieutenant Commander Saunders of command.

On 27 November 1943, MUSKALLUNGE departed on her second war patrol which was conducted in the Western Carolines area, and south of Guam. During this patrol she scored hits for damage to a tanker and two freighters. She returned to Pearl Harbor on 21 January 1944. Extensive engine trouble necessitated her return to Mare Island, California, where a new set of engines was installed, this work being completed by 5 April 1944. She then sailed for Pearl Harbor, arriving 12 April 1944. She departed, 30 April to conduct her third war patrol in the Palau area. This was a tedious patrol devoid of attacks and she returned to Fremantle, Australia on 4 July 1944, for refit.

MUSKALLUNGE departed Fremantle, 1 August 1944, to conduct her fourth war patrol, in company with FLIER, bound for the South China Sea. Enroute to her patrol area, she conducted a submerged attack in Mindoro Strait,

obtaining one hit for damage to a destroyer. On 21 August 1944, off Camranh Bay, French Indo China, she obtained one hit on a freighter and scored three hits to sink passenger-cargo DURBAN MARU of 7,163 tons (11°-43'N; 109°-17'E). She was then forced deep and subjected to severe depth charge attack, both by aircraft and several escorts. She returned to Fremantle for refit on 22 September 1944. While undergoing refit at Fremantle, Lieutenant Commander L. A. Lajaunie, Jr., USN, relieved Commander Russillo as commanding officer. MUSKALLUNGE departed on her fifth war patrol 19 October 1944, operating in the South China Sea, west of Palawan Passage. Her one contact was made on a cruiser with five escorts. Lacking a good attack position on the cruiser, an approach was made on the escorts but the salvo of torpedoes fanned out and ran under the shallow draft of the target. MUSKALLUNGE returned to Pearl Harbor on 14 December, and on 16 December 1944, departed for major overhaul in the Mare Island Navy Yard, arriving at San Francisco on 24 December 1944. She departed 2 April 1945 and returned to Pearl Harbor on 9 April.

On 26 April 1945, MUSKALLUNGE departed Pearl Harbor on her sixth war patrol which was to be conducted north of Formosa. An additional mission was to act as lifeguard for Philippine based air strikes on China and Formosa. On 20 May, Lieutenant Commander Lajaunie became ill and was relieved of command at sea by Commander William H. Lawrence, USN, on 21 May 1945. Enemy shipping was not encountered and an opportunity was not afforded for rescue of aviators. She returned, via Saipan, to Midway, arriving 15 June 1945.

MUSKALLUNGE departed Midway, 30 July 1945, on her seventh and last war patrol which was conducted along the Kurile Island Chain, north of Japan. On 8 August 1945, she contacted several sea trucks and commenced a daylight submerged approach under fog-bound conditions. When four torpedoes were fired at close range but missed, it became apparent that range was too close for another attack, and MUSKALLUNGE surfaced and closed to 350 yards and manned her deck guns. Poor visibility hampered the accuracy of gunfire which severely damaged two of the sea trucks. Meanwhile, one of the enemy had returned gunfire which killed Charles H. Whitman, EM 3/c who was manning the starboard .50 caliber machine gun. Two other men received superficial wounds.

The news of victory brought orders to proceed to Tokyo for the surrender ceremonies, and on 1 September 1945, MUSKALLUNGE entered Tokyo Bay. On 3 September, she sailed for Pearl Harbor, departing 13 September to steam via the Panama Canal for New London, Connecticut. She was placed out of commission in reserve at New London on 29 January 1947.

MUSKALLUNGE was again placed in commission on 31 August 1956, preparatory to transfer to the Government of Brazil. She was decommissioned on 18 January 1957, and transferred to Brazil under terms of the Mutual Defense Assistance Program. Rear Admiral Luiz F. Pinto da Luz, accepted MUSKALLUNGE for commissioning in the Navy of the Government of Brazil.

MUSKALLUNGE earned five battle stars and other awards for operations as listed below:

1 Star/MARIANAS OPERATION:

2nd Bonins Raid: 24 Jun 1944

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- 1 Star/OKINAWA GUNTO OPERATION:
Assault and Occupation of Okinawa Gunto: 16 May-15 Jun 1945
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 7 Sep-25 Oct 1943
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 27 Nov 1943-21 Jan 1944
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 1 Aug-22 Sept 1944

ORIGINAL STATISTICS

LENGTH OVER-ALL:	311'9"
EXTREME BEAM:	27'3"
STANDARD DISPLACEMENT:	
Tons:	1526
Mean Draft:	15'3"
SUBMERGED DISPLACEMENT:	
Tons:	2424
DESIGN SPEED:	
Surface:	20.25 knots
Submerged:	8.75 knots
DESIGN COMPLEMENT:	
Officer:	6
Enlisted:	54
ARMAMENT:	
Main:	(10) Torpedo Tubes
Secondary:	(1) 3"/50
	(2) .50 caliber machine guns
	(2) .30 caliber machine guns
Torpedoes:	24