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Authority: E.O. 13526

By: NDC NARA Date: Dec 31, 2012

HISTORY OF THE U.S.S. YAHARA (AOG-37)

The U.S.S. YAHARA (AOG-37) was built for the Navy by the Maritime Commission, being launched 30 July 1944 at East Coast Shipyards, Inc., Bayonne, N. J. On 20 September a Board of Inspection and Survey found the ship satisfactory and she was accepted for the U.S. Navy by Lt. N. Clark Biggs, USNR. Three days later she was moved to Marine Basin Company, Brooklyn, N. Y., for conversion and commissioning.

The YAHARA was put in commission on 29 September 1944 at Marine Basin Company by Lt.(jg) F. E. Hilton, Executive Officer; Lt. N. Clark Biggs assumed command.

After conversion she moved to the Naval Frontier Base, Staten Island, N. Y., for outfitting and minor alterations, picking up ammunition at Earle, N. J., enroute. While at the Frontier Base the ship was depermed, all calibrating completed and structural firing of the guns conducted. B

On 20 October the YAHARA conducted structural firing tests off Ambrose Light Ship. She suffered minor damage when a strong current set her down on the H.M.S. RENEE (CE-03) while attempting to moor at the Frontier Base.

Outfitting completed, the YAHARA got underway for Norfolk the 30th of October. Upon her arrival at the Naval Operating Base, the next day, she reported to the Auxiliary Vessel Shakedown Group for shakedown.

November 2nd the YAHARA got underway on shakedown cruise in Chesapeake Bay. On the 11th, her shakedown completed, she returned to the Naval Operating Base at Norfolk, Va., to undergo a military inspection by Commander Operation Training Command, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. The following day she moved to the Navy Yard at Portsmouth, Va., for post-shakedown availability, until the 21st. Upon completion of this yard period, the YAHARA returned to NOB, Norfolk, to await orders for active duty.

On the 22nd of November the YAHARA got underway for Aruba, N.W.I., to load

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HISTORY OF U.S.S. YAHARA (AOG-37)
(continued)

aviation gasoline and diesel oil. She arrived there 1 December and twelve hours later, loaded to capacity, was again underway, this time for Cristobal, C.Z., and the Pacific. On the 6th she steamed through the canal and set course for San Diego, arriving at the Destroyer Base without incident on the 19th.

After a four-day availability, to accomplish voyage repairs, this tanker was again underway. The next destination was Pearl Harbor, T.H., where she arrived 2 January 1945.

Upon arrival at Pearl Harbor, T.H., the Commanding Officer reported to Commander Service Squadron Eight for duty. January 3rd an inspection party headed by Captain E. Kirby-Smith, USN, came aboard and conducted a military inspection for Commander Service Squadron Eight. The YAHARA left Pearl on the 5th for a trip below the Equator, to Canton Island in the Phoenix Group, to deliver her full cargo of diesel oil and aviation gasoline, arriving eight days later. She discharged her cargo to the Army Transport Dock and eighteen hours later was returning to Pearl, arriving on the 24th.

Three days after her return she was ordered to load to capacity with aviation gasoline. On the 31st she proceeded to Kahalui, Maui, T.H., to discharge her cargo and returned to Pearl on 3 February.

The next day the tanker was again loaded with aviation gasoline and on the 5th was underway for Johnston Island, T.H. She arrived four days later. After an eighteen-hour layover, during which she delivered her cargo to the Naval Air Station Fuel Dock, the YAHARA returned to her base at Pearl, arriving the 14th.

On February 16, 1944, Lt.(jg) Frank E. Hilton, USNR, relieved Lt. Nehemiah Clark Biggs as commanding officer, in obedience to orders of BuPers.

After an eight-day availability to accomplish voyage repairs, the YAHARA was ordered to proceed to Ulithi, Caroline Islands, and report to ComServRon TEN

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HISTORY OF THE U.S.S. YAHARA (AOG-37)
(continued)

for duty. On the 25th of February she left Pearl Harbor in convoy for Eniwetok, M.I., stopping at Johnston Island to discharge her cargo of avgas to the Naval Air Station for use in the search for General Harmon. On 13 March the "37" arrived at Eniwetok, where she waited four days for a convoy to Ulithi. On the 17th orders were received by the Port Director to route ships to Ulithi independently and the YAHARA was sailed that day without escort.

She arrived in Ulithi on March 24th and reported to Commander Service Squadron Ten for duty. After undergoing minor voyage repairs, the YAHARA took on a cargo of motor gas and diesel oil, and 50 drums of lube oil. ComServRonTEN further assigned this vessel to duty with Task Force 51, and ordered her to be ready to sail for Okinawa to join that Force.

Throughout the month of April and half of May the YAHARA waited at Ulithi for the order to move up. On the 19th of May she left in convoy for Kerama Retto, but while enroute her orders were changed to proceed to Hagushi Beaches, Okinawa, where she arrived 28 May 1944. The trip was made without incident, although there was considerable air activity in the vicinity.

Upon arrival at Hagushi, the YAHARA reported to ComServRonTEN Representative "Baker" for duty. On June 6th she made a trip to Kerama Retto to deliver mogas. The next day, while returning to Hagushi, the YAHARA collided with the U.S.S. BEALE (DD-471) suffering damage to the bows of both vessels. She returned to Hagushi immediately and was granted a seven-day availability to accomplish necessary repairs.

On June 13th she commenced harbor duties in the Hagushi Area, delivering motor gas and diesel oil to various ships. On June 27th the YAHARA made the first delivery of fuel to Naha Harbor, delivering 190,000 gallons of motor gas, and returning to Hagushi that night.

During the month of July she operated in the Hagushi Beaches area, acting as

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(continued)

small boat fueling center, in addition to transporting motor gas and diesel oil from large tankers to the shore fueling station at Purple One Beach and to YOGL's in Naha Harbor. On 19 July this tanker got underway for sea to ride out a typhoon, returning the 21st.

On August 1st she proceeded to Nago Wan to ride out a typhoon at anchor and returned to Hagushi Beaches on the 3rd. The rest of August was spent in fueling small craft and delivering fuel to shore installations, not only at Hagushi and Naha but also at Ie Shima, Chimu Wan and Buckner Bay.

With the end of hostilities in August the YAHARA found her duties practically unchanged, and is still operating in this area, performing the same duties. On September 16th the YAHARA again went to sea to ride out a typhoon, returning to duty two days later. Upon her return she was ordered to emergency harbor duty in Buckner Bay, replacing YO's grounded during the typhoon.

A severe typhoon which hit Okinawa on October 9th was ridden out at anchor in Buckner Bay. The winds reached a force in excess of 125 knots and the YAHARA lost her starboard anchor when the chain parted, allowing her to drag on the port anchor for an approximate distance of three miles, but she suffered no further damage.

At the present time the YAHARA is still operating in the Okinawa area, performing the various duties for which she was designed, i.e. the transporting of fuel from larger tankers to shore installations and acting as a small craft fueling center.