

# HISTORY OF U.S.S. SILVERSIDES (SS236)-

The famous USS SILVERSIDES was brought into life on 4 November 1940, when her keel was laid at the Navy Yard, Mare Island, California. She was launched on 26 August 1941, by Mrs. J.J. Hogan. When she was commissioned at Mare Island on 15 December 1941, the ship was under the command of Lieutenant Commander Creed C. Burlingame, USN. Since the attack on Pearl Harbor had just been made, the SILVERSIDES was immediately sent out to make her test runs so that she could be pressed into service as soon as possible. Shakedown runs and contact torpedo firings were made at San Diego, then the ship returned to Mare Island for her acceptance trials and deep dive. On April 4 1942, she was ready to be tested in battle and went to Pearl Harbor for a period of training before making her first war patrol.

FIRST PATROL - - - under command of Lt-Comdr. Creed C. Burlingame, USN. The SILVERSIDES began her war patrol experience when she left Pearl Harbor on 30 April 1942, for her first war patrol in enemy controlled waters. This patrol was the first of a series of outstanding successes which have characterized the history of this famous ship. The entire patrol, which lasted for 52 days, was conducted in the area of KII SUIDO. The combat insignia was awarded for the following damage done to the enemy:

SUNK	1 Submarine	1,400 tons
	1 Trawler	350 tons
	1 Supply Ship	5,477 tons
	1 Supply Ship	8,800 tons
	1 Naval Auxiliary	9,600 tons
	TOTAL	25,627 tons

DAMAGED	1 Tanker	10,000 tons
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TOTAL SUNK AND DAMAGED		35,627 tons
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The Trawler was sunk by gunfire. All other ships were attacked with torpedoes. It was during this patrol, in her initial engagement, that the SILVERSIDES suffered her first and only personnel casualty. MIKE HARBIN, TM3c, USN, was killed while working as a second loader in a gun battle with an armed Trawler. On 21 June 1942, the battle tired SILVERSIDES returned to the Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, for rest and refit.

SECOND PATROL - - - under command of Lt-Comdr. Creed C. Burlingame, USN. After a normal refit the SILVERSIDES again departed from Pearl Harbor on 15 July 1942, for her second war patrol. This patrol was in and around the area of ICHUJE SAKI and lasted for 55 days. It was another outstanding success, and the combat insignia was awarded for the following damages:

SUNK:	1 Passenger-Freighter	7,500 tons
	1 Passenger-Freighter	7,000 tons
	1 Trawler	500 tons
	1 Trawler	250 tons
	TOTAL	15,250 tons

DAMAGED	1 Tanker	5,400 tons
	1 Trawler	350 tons
	TOTAL	5,750 tons

TOTAL SUNK AND DAMAGED		21,000 tons
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The Trawler was attacked by gunfire while all attacks on the other ships were made with torpedoes. On 8 September 1942, the ship returned to Pearl Harbor to be refitted by the USS SPERRY.

THIRD PATROL - - - under command of Lt-Comdr. Creed C. Burlingame, USN. On 2 October 1942, the SILVERSIDES was off for another patrol. This time she explored the waters about TRUK, NEW IRELAND, and BUKA. While not as outstanding as her first two patrols, the combat insignia was awarded for two more ships which were added to the SILVERSIDES growing list:

SUNK:	1 Freighter-Transport	11,200 tons
	(MANILA MARU)	
	1 Warship	1,300 tons
	(BELIEVED A DESTROYER)	
	TOTAL	12,500 tons

All attacks were made with torpedoes. After this 54 day patrol, the SILVERSIDES made its first visit to Australia. She arrived at Brisbane on 25 November 1942 to be refitted by the USS SPERRY.



FOURTH PATROL - - under command of Lt-Comdr. Creed C. Burlingame, USN. The SILVERSIDES left Brisbane on 17 December 1942 for her fourth war patrol. It lasted for 45 days, and the entire period on station was spent around NEW IRELAND. Another combat insignia was awarded for the following damage to the enemy:

SUNK	1 Tanker	10,010 tons
DAMAGED	1 Supply Ship	7,210 tons
	1 Supply Ship	5,155 tons
	1 Submarine	1,225 tons
	Total	14,360 tons

TOTAL SUNK AND DAMAGED

24,370 tons

All attacks were made with torpedoes. It was during this patrol that one of the most unique events of the submarine war occurred. Shortly after the ship left Brisbane, George Platter, Fireman 3c, had an acute attack of appendicitis, and it was evident that an operation was imperative. In spite of the limited facilities available, the operation was ably performed by T.A. Moore, PHM 1c, on 22 December 1942. No complications developed, even when the patient was thrown out of his bunk in a depth charge attack shortly after the operation. On 31 January 1943, the SILVERSIDES came back to Pearl Harbor to undergo a Navy Yard overhaul.

FIFTH PATROL - - under command of Lt-Comdr. Creed C. Burlingame, USN. Patrol report for this patrol was not available and information is approximated. After a three month period of overhaul the SILVERSIDES was again ready to go after Japanese shipping. On her fifth patrol, however, her primary mission was to lay mines in the area around Bougainville. Besides accomplishing this she torpedoed and sank a 10,000 ton transport. Another combat insignia was awarded for the fifth and last successful patrol under Commander Burlingame. On 1 July 1943 the SILVERSIDES arrived at Brisbane, Australia, for a normal refit.

SIXTH PATROL - - under command of Lt-Comdr. J.S. Coye, Jr., USN. The SILVERSIDES left Brisbane on 21 July 1943 on the sixth patrol. She now had a new skipper, Lt-Comdr. J.S. Coye, Jr. USN, but, unfortunately, this was the first patrol for which the combat insignia was not awarded. A series of premature torpedoes and heart breaking misses prevented any successes. The patrol was conducted along the TRUK-BISMARK and TRUK-PALAU shipping lanes. On 4 September 1943 and after 54 days of discouraging experiences, the SILVERSIDES returned to Brisbane for refit.

SEVENTH PATROL - - under command of Lt-Comdr. J.S. Coye, Jr. USN. The seventh patrol was another outstanding success for the SILVERSIDES. It began on 5 October 1943 and lasted only 34 days. The combat insignia was awarded for the following damage inflicted in that short time:

SUNK	1 Freighter (TAIRAN MARU Class)	7,000 tons
	1 Freighter (Class unknown)	7,000 tons
	1 Freighter (KALAU MARU Class)	1,893 tons
	1 Freighter (JOHORE MARU Class)	6,182 tons
	Total	22,075 tons

One 5,000 ton freighter (Class unknown) was damaged. All attacks were by torpedoes. The patrol was conducted in the operational area of Task Force 72 (SOLOMONS-BISMARKS-NEW GUINEA) enroute to Pearl Harbor. The ship arrived at the Submarine Base at Pearl Harbor on 8 November 1943 for a normal refit.

EIGHT PATROL - - under command of Lt-Comdr. J.S. Coye, Jr. USN. The SILVERSIDES continued making new successes in her eighth patrol. Leaving on 4 December 1943, she conducted a 49 day patrol around the PALAU Islands. The combat insignia was awarded for three more ships sunk and two damaged:

SUNK	1 Tanker	7,000 tons
	1 Freighter	5,500 tons
	1 Passenger-Freighter	6,000 tons
	Total	18,500 tons
DAMAGED	1 Freighter	4,000 tons
	1 Freighter	4,000 tons
	Total	8,000 tons

TOTAL SUNK AND DAMAGED

26,500 tons



All ships were attacked by torpedoes. The principal engagement was a night surface attack and 20 torpedoes were fired in all. At one point the SILVERSIDES found herself in the embarrassing position of being number two ship in the starboard column of the convoy, but the enemy was too busy looking elsewhere to notice. A total of three ships were sunk and one damaged in this attack. Also during this patrol a reconnaissance of WAKE was made and pictures were taken. On 15 January 1944 the SILVERSIDES returned to Pearl Harbor to be refitted by the USS SPERRY and take a well earned rest.

NINTH PATROL - - under command of Lt-Comdr. J.S. Coye., Jr. USN. The ninth patrol began on 15 February 1944 was conducted in the area west of the MARILAINS, PALAU, and GUINEA. It was the fourth patrol under the command of Commander Coye and another combat insignia was awarded. The following damage was done to the enemy by torpedo fire:

SUNK	1 Freighter	3,000 tons
	1 Freighter	4,500 tons
	Total	7,500 tons

on 8 April 1944, 53 days after leaving Pearl Harbor, the SILVERSIDES arrived at the Submarine Base, Brisbane, Australia, for refit.

TENTH PATROL - - under command of Lt-Comdr. J.S. Coye., Jr. USN. The tenth patrol was a highlight in the colorful patrol record of the SILVERSIDES. Five more ships were sunk and three more damaged for a total of 41,600 tons. This brought the total score to date to 133,407 tons sunk and 71,210 tons damaged. The patrol began on 26 April 1944, and was conducted around the MARILAINS Islands. The following is a breakdown of damage for which the combat insignia was awarded.

SUNK	1 Transport (TATULRU MARU)	6,300 tons
	1 Transport (MIRAGE MARU)	4,300 tons
	1 Freighter	5,000 tons
	1 Freighter	5,000 tons
	1 Freighter	3,000 tons
	Total	23,600 tons
DAMAGED	1 Freighter	5,000 tons
	1 freighter	5,000 tons
	1 Transport (ATULU MARU)	8,000 tons
	Total	18,000 tons
TOTAL SUNK AND DAMAGED		41,600 tons

All attacks were made by torpedoes. In one attack on a convoy a very favorable set up of over lapping targets was obtained. Five different targets were struck by the six torpedoes fired. Three sank and at least one was heavily damaged. On 11 June after 41 days of patrol, the SILVERSIDES arrived at the Submarine Base Pearl Harbor. On 13 June, she proceeded to Mare Island California for a Navy Yard Overhaul.

ELEVENTH PATROL - - under command of Commander J.S. Coye Jr., USN. On 4 September 1944, the SILVERSIDES left Mare Island enroute to Pearl Harbor. She arrived on 12 September and began a twelve day period of voyage repairs and training. On 24 September she departed on her eleventh patrol. This patrol was conducted in two places. The first was a 41 day period with a wolf pack around FORIOS and KYUSHU. Although no damage was done to the enemy, the SILVERSIDES went through one of her most exciting and hazardous experiences. When it was apparent that a number of enemy patrol vessels were closing in on the badly damaged USS SALMON, the SILVERSIDES surfaced in order to distract their attention. The maneuver succeeded for the SALMON while the SILVERSIDES dove and evaded the vessels which turned their attention to her. The SILVERSIDES and the USS TRIGGER escorted the SALMON back to base. The company of ships arrived at Saipan on 3 November 1944, 41 days after leaving Pearl Harbor. The SILVERSIDES remained seven days for voyage repairs and then left for a 14 day anti-patrol vessel sweep along with six other submarines around the BOWEN Islands. This was the second part of the eleventh patrol. The SILVERSIDES was awarded the combat insignia for damaging one 2000 ton patrol vessel by gunfire. She arrived at HONOLULU on 23 November 1944 for refit. This was her last patrol under Commander Coye, who was relieved by Commander J.C. Nichols, USN.

TWELFTH PATROL - - under command of Commander J.C. Nichols, USN. The twelfth patrol began 12 December 1944 and was conducted in the East China Sea. A torpedo attack was made on a large AK, believed to be a 6,800



ton EMPLD Class freighter. Since proof of sinking was not available at the time, credit was given for damaging the vessel, and the combat insignia was not awarded. However, JIGFO. has since reported that the vessel was the 4,556 ton LILLY MARU and was actually sunk in the attack. Credit was later given and the combat insignia was awarded for a successful patrol. After 49 days at sea, the ship returned to MIDWAY on 12 February 1945 to be refitted by the USS BEIR.

THIRTEENTH PATROL - - under command of Commander J.C. Nichols, USN. The SILVER SIDES left MIDWAY on 9 March 1945 on her thirteenth war patrol. It was a 51 day patrol, conducted in the area of the BUNGO SUDO. Another success was rung up for the SILVER SIDES. The combat insignia was awarded for sinking a 2,000 ton freighter by torpedo fire and damaging a 450 ton trawler by gunfire. The ship returned to Pearl Harbor for refit on 29 April 1945.

FOURTEENTH PATROL - - under command of Commander J.C. Nichols, USN. On 30 May 1945 the MIGHTY SILVERSIDES left Pearl Harbor on her fourteenth and last war patrol. It consisted of lifeguard duty in the SHIKOKU and HONSHU areas. The combat insignia was awarded for rescuing two aviators:

2nd Lieutenant J. E. Hinkle, USAAF on 22 July 1945

Lieutenant B. V. Burtch, USNR, from USS INDEPENDENCE on 24 July 1945

After 62 days of patrol, the SILVERSIDES arrived at GULM on 30 July 1945 for refit by the USS SPERRY. The end of the war found the ship ready to start out on her fifteenth patrol. Orders were received, however, to proceed to Pearl Harbor and the SILVERSIDES left GULM on 18 August 1945, to begin her long trip home. The ship remained at Pearl Harbor only one day and then proceeded to New York, via the Panama Canal. She moored at Pier #10, U.S. Naval Frontier Base, Tompkinsville, Staten Island, New York on 21 September 1945. Home from the dangers of the deep, home from good hunting was the mighty submarine "SILVERSIDES"

Although her war career is over, the SILVERSIDES has not outlived her usefulness. By a directive dated December 1946, USS SILVER SIDES (SS 236) now acts as a Reserve Training Submarine for the Ninth Naval District. She is permanently tied up at the end of Randolph Street along side the Naval Armory in Chicago, Ill.

#### PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

On behalf of the President, Secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal presented the SILVERSIDES with the PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION, which reads:

"For outstanding performance in combat during the Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, and Tenth War Patrols in enemy Japanese-controlled waters. Daring in her tactics and tenacious in the face of particularly hazardous conditions, the USS SILVERSIDES tracked her targets with relentless aggression. In audacious defiance of heavy enemy escorts and air opposition, she boldly penetrated hostile screens to launch her torpedoes, striking repeatedly at every quarter with devastating results to the Japanese in the destruction of twenty four ships and extensive damage done to additional vessels. Her exceptional skill and her intrepid fulfillment of perilous missions necessary to defeat a fiercely determined foe attest the superb combat readiness of her gallant officers and men."

USS SILVERSIDES earned twelve Battle Stars on the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service Medal, for participating in the following operations:

1 Star/Capture and Defense of Guadalcanal -- 10 August 1942 to 8 February 1943.

1 Star/Okinawa Gunto Operation

Assault and Occupation of Okinawa Gunto -- 24 March to 30 June 1945.

1 Star/Third Fleet Operations against Japan -- 10 July to 15 August 1945.

1 Star/Eastern New Guinea Operation

Finschhafen Occupation -- 22 September 1943 to 17 February 1944.

1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific -- 30 April to 21 June 1942.

1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific -- 15 July to 8 September 1942.

1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific -- 17 May to 1 July 1943.

- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific -- 4 December 1943 to 15 January 1944
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific -- 15 February to 8 April 1944.
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific -- 26 April to 11 June 1944.
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific -- 24 September to 23 November 1944
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific -- 22 December 1944 to 12 February 1945

# SUMMARY OF PATROL RESULTS

Number of Patrol	Number and Type of Ships Sunk	Total tonnage of Ships Sunk	Number and Type of Ships Damaged	Total tonnage of Ships Damaged	Total number Aviators Rescued
1.	1 Submarine 1 Trawler 2 Supply Ships	25,627 tons	1 Tanker	10,000 tons	
2.	2 Passenger-Freighters 2 Trawlers	15,250 tons	1 Tanker 1 Trawler	5,750 tons	
3.	1 Freighter-Transport 1 Warship	12,500 tons			
4.	1 Tanker	10,010 tons	2 Supply Ships 1 Submarine	14,360 tons	
5.	1 Transport	10,000 tons	(Approximated from information available)		
6.					
7.	4 Freighters	22,075 tons	1 Freighter	5,000 tons	
8.	1 Tanker 2 Freighters	18,500 tons	2 Freighters	8,000 tons	
9.	2 Freighters	7,500 tons			
10.	2 Transports 3 Freighters	23,600 tons	1 Transport 2 Freighters	18,000 tons	
11.			1 Patrol Vessel	7,000 tons	
12.			1 Supply Ship		
13.	1 Supply Ship	2,000 tons	1 Trawler	450 tons	
14.					TWO
Total for War	29	147,062 tons	15	68,560 tons	TWO