



***Raton* (SS-270)**, an attack submarine, was laid down 29 May 1942 by Manitowoc Shipbuilding Co., Manitowoc, Wis.; launched 24 January 1943; sponsored by Mrs. C. C. West; and commissioned 13 July 1943, Lt. Comdr. J. W. Davis in command.

Following training in Lake Michigan and at Coco Solo, C.Z., *Raton* sailed for the southwest Pacific 19 September 1943, and upon arriving at Brisbane, Australia, on 16 October, joined Submarine Force, 7th Fleet.

From Brisbane, *Raton* sailed to Tulagi, Solomon Islands for her first war patrol, from 20 November to 6 December 1943, in the Bismarck Archipelago-Solomons-New Guinea area. On 24 November, while patrolling west of Massau, *Raton* sighted two Japanese cargo-type ships, with two destroyers and a "Rufe" float plane. The submarine trailed the convoy and that night made a torpedo attack, sinking the *Onoe Maru*. The excellent countermeasures of the two escorts thwarted four attempts to sink the remaining freighter. On 28 November, she sighted a Rabaul bound convoy of five cargo ships, accompanied by two escorts. In a submerged attack, *Raton* sank two ships of the convoy, the *Hokko Maru* and *Yuri Maru*. After a severe pounding by the escorts, *Raton* escaped, but remained in the area for a return bout. In a night attack, she heavily damaged a third freighter, and called for assistance, as her torpedoes were nearly expended. *Gato* (SS-212) arrived and joined the attack, only to be jumped by the two Japanese destroyers. *Raton* surfaced and raced at flank speed to draw the escorts away from *Gato*, and succeeded, allowing *Gato* to sink *Columbia Maru*.

Original Source Here: <http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/r3/raton.htm>

After returning to Milne Bay, New Guinea, for rest and refit alongside *Fulton* (AS-11), *Raton* departed on her second war patrol, from 11 December to 25 January 1944, for the Mindanao-Celebes-Halmahera area. On 24 December, the submarine made an attack on four merchantmen and two destroyers in Morotai Strait, sinking *Heiwa Maru* and damaging an auxiliary aircraft carrier. On 2 January, she encountered two tankers, escorted by a *Fubuki*-class destroyer northwest of Faland Island on the Palau shipping lane. She scored hits on one tanker, but the efficient countermeasures of the Japanese escorts interrupted the attack. *Raton* departed the patrol area on 19 January and reached Fremantle on 25 January for refit by *Pelias* (AS-14).

Her third patrol, from 18 February to 14 April, was conducted in the Java Sea, the Karimata Strait, and the South China Sea. *Rasher* (SS-269) sank the only two ships she contacted.

Her fourth patrol, from 19 May to 23 June, in the South China and Java Seas, provided good hunting. On 23 May, *Raton* intercepted two small intercoastal freighters north of the Tambelan Islands, and sank both with her deck gun. That same evening, she contacted a fast convoy of three transports and four destroyers. She sank destroyer *Iki*, and damaged a transport. On 28 May, *Raton* tracked a Japanese *RO-61*-class sub, but missed due to an unfavorable firing angle. On 6 June, a bright moonlit night brought out a large convoy of 11 ships with four destroyer-type escorts. One frigate was blown apart by three hits from a spread of fish fired by *Raton*, but the submarine received a severe pounding from a prolonged depth charge attack before making her escape. A boarding party from the submarine captured a small sailing vessel on 13 June, taking 11 prisoners and scuttling the craft. Four days later, *Raton* sighted a small freighter, sinking it with one torpedo, and rescuing nine survivors. SS-270 returned to Fremantle 23 June for upkeep alongside *Orion* (AS-18).

The fifth patrol, 18 July to 10 September, conducted in the South China Sea off Luzon, gave *Raton* only one victory, a tanker left beached off Dasol Bay, Philippines, on 4 August.

*Raton* had better luck on her sixth patrol, 6 October to 1 December, in the South China Sea. On the night of 18 October, *Raton* slipped into the center of a nine-ship convoy for a surface attack. She fired both sets of torpedo tubes, her bow tubes at six overlapping targets while her stern fish were fired at a large freighter. Two ships, *Shiranesan Maru* and *Takai Maru* went down, and another vessel was damaged. A final attack resulted in damage to another cargo ship. With her torpedo supply running low and a typhoon approaching, *Raton* pulled into Mios Woendi, Schouten Islands, for more fuel and torpedoes with which to finish the patrol. Leaving Mios Woendi 27 October, *Raton* encountered an enemy task group of two heavy cruisers and five escort vessels on 6 November. In a submerged attack, she scored three hits on a *Mogami*-class cruiser, *Kumano*, but did not put the heavy out of action. On the 11th, *Raton* and *Ray* (SS-271) attacked a four-ship convoy guarded by three escorts. In a surface action *Raton* sank *Unkai Maru* and *Kurasaki* with four torpedoes. Then, both submarines fired torpedoes at

the remaining auxiliaries with unconfirmed results. With only four torpedoes remaining, *Raton* steamed home, arriving San Francisco 1 December.

On 13 March 1945, after an overhaul at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, *Raton* headed west for Pearl Harbor for refresher training. She sailed for the Yellow Sea 20 April for her seventh war patrol. On 2 May, she blew up a loaded tanker, *Toryu Maru*, in a night torpedo attack off Shantung Peninsula despite gunfire from two Japanese escorts. That same day, *Raton* sank a medium-sized cargo ship, *Rezikan Maru*, in a submerged torpedo approach. On 16 May, she made a submerged attack on two transports, sinking the larger one, *Eiju Maru*. *Raton* returned to Guam 25 May for upkeep alongside *Proteus* (AS-19).

The submarine sailed on 22 June for her final patrol of World War II, lifeguard duty off Hong Kong. No Allied planes went down in the area, and she made no enemy contacts. Arriving at Subic Bay 23 July for upkeep, *Raton* was preparing for her next patrol when the war ended. On 31 August 1945 she sailed for home, arriving at San Francisco in mid-September.

Following overhaul at Mare Island Shipyard, *Raton* transited the Panama Canal, and arrived New London, Conn. on 12 March 1946 where she was assigned to the 2d Fleet. She spent the next 2½ years in training exercises in the North Atlantic and the Caribbean, helping to maintain America's and the free world's defense posture during the early years of the Cold War.

After being placed in reserve in the fall of 1948, *Raton* was decommissioned at New London, Conn., on 11 March 1949. She remained in the Atlantic Reserve Fleet at New London until July 1952 when she was towed to Philadelphia Naval Shipyard for conversion to a radar picket submarine. Redesignated SSR-270 on 18 July 1952, she was recommissioned 21 September 1953, Lt. Comdr. J. K. Wills in command.

Departing Philadelphia on 8 December, she underwent training for several months in the Norfolk area. Ordered to the Pacific, she arrived at San Diego on 7 March 1954 via the Panama Canal.

The submarine spent the next year in local operations, before departing from San Diego on 11 May 1955 for a 6-month deployment to WestPac. She returned to San Diego on 6 November 1955. Prior to and following her second 7th Fleet deployment, 13 May-8 November 1957, SSR-270 trained in exercises off the Pacific coast.

After overhaul at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, from 7 July to 24 November 1958, and underway training, the submarine deployed to the 7th Fleet from early March 1959 to mid-November, participating in operations with SEATO and the Japanese Maritime Defense Force.

In early 1960 *Raton* was engaged in local operations, including evaluation of new sonar concepts, and training of UDT personnel in covert reconnaissance. On 1 July 1960, *Raton* was redesignated an auxiliary submarine AGSS-270.

In Mare Island Naval Shipyard from January to April 1961 for a major overhaul, *Raton* sailed west for her fourth 7th Fleet deployment 3 July 1961, returning to San Diego 19 December. The year 1962 was occupied in fleet training operations off the west coast of the United States, providing services for air, surface, and submarine forces.

Her fifth post-World War II WestPac deployment, from January to June 1963, included participation in two major ASW exercises with U.S. and SEATO forces. Following an overhaul period from November 1963 to early March 1964, *Raton* deployed again from 6 July to 23 December to the Far East, where she operated with naval forces of Thailand, the Philippines, and the Republic of China, under the Military Assistance Program.

Local fleet and type operations filled 1965 and early 1966 when *Raton* once more followed the setting sun in mid-April for another tour of duty with the 7th Fleet. While deployed, *Raton* exercised with SEATO naval units in Exercise "Sea Imp." On 17 October 1966, AGSS-270 returned to San Diego.

1967 was spent in local operations, reserve training, and semiannual overhaul. On 20 and 21 May 1968, *Raton* served as a test ship to determine that a small fleet tug could rescue men from a sunken submarine resting on the ocean floor. *Raton* commenced her final WestPac deployment 15 July 1968, arriving Yokohama 7 August. During her deployment, AGSS-270 provided training services to 7th Fleet and SEATO units. The veteran submarine returned to San Diego 20 December 1968. She was decommissioned at Mare Island Naval Shipyard and stricken from the Navy list 28 June 1969. The stripped hull was designated as a target ship for Pacific Fleet gunnery exercise.

*Raton* was awarded six battle stars for service in World War II.