



Ray (SS-271), an attack submarine, was laid down 20 July 1942; launched 28 February 1943 by Manitowoc Shipbuilding Co., Manitowoc, Wis.; sponsored by Mrs. S. C. Loomis; and commissioned 27 July 1943, Lt. Comdr. B. J. Harral in command.

After training in Lake Michigan until 15 August, *Ray* arrived Coco Solo, C.Z., via New Orleans on 31 August for intensive training. Departing Panama on 5 October, she reached Brisbane on 30 October.

Departing Milne Bay, New Guinea, on 13 November for her first war patrol, *Ray* searched the area north of the Bismarck Archipelago. On the New Hanover-Truk shipping lane, she made radar contact with a three-ship convoy, escorted by three patrol craft. Attacking just before dawn she scored three hits on one of the freighters. Then, after evading the escorts' countermeasures, she followed the convoy and sank the converted gunboat *Nikkai Maru* with a spread of torpedoes. Before ending her patrol in December, *Ray* twice unsuccessfully attacked another convoy.

Ray's second patrol, 11 December 1943 to 12 January 1944 was in the Celebes-Ambon-Timor area. Near midnight on 26 December she sighted an unescorted tanker standing out from Tioro Strait. When the enemy ship reached open water, *Ray* fired a spread of torpedoes which stopped *Kyoko Maru* dead in the water and sent a huge mushroom of flame into the night sky as the target disintegrated. On 1 January 1944, SS-271 intercepted two ships with escorts in the mouth of Ambon Bay, Java, and sank converted gunboat *Okuyo Maru* with three hits. The accompanying cargo ship tried to ram the submarine, and a combined aerial attack by patrol bombers and a sustained depth charge attack forced *Ray* to run deep. Three days later, following an unsuccessful attack on two cargo ships escorted by a *Chidori*-class destroyer, *Ray* returned to Fremantle.

The third patrol, 6 February to 27 March, in the South China and Java Seas included the laying of a minefield off Saigon, Indochina, on 22 February. On the evening of 2 March, *Ray* intercepted a nine-ship convoy; and early on the 3d came within firing range. A spread of four torpedoes damaged a tanker, but *Bluefish* (SS-222) crossed *Ray's* line of fire preventing a coup de grace. On 18 March *Ray* intercepted two *Chidori*-class destroyers and a patrol craft, fired six torpedoes, and dived deep. The submarine's crew heard an explosion. An intense depth charge attack followed. *Ray* escaped after sunset. The submarine ended her patrol at Fremantle

SS-271 departed Fremantle on 23 April for her fourth patrol. Her hunting ground was the Davao Gulf-Molucca Passage area. On the afternoon of 21 May, she spotted a nine-ship convoy escorted by surface ships and seaplanes. *Ray* surfaced that night, pursued the convoy, and attacked early the next morning. She fired six "fish" at a large transport and an overlapping smaller cargo vessel sinking transport *Tempei Maru* and causing undetermined damage to the freighter. A spread fired from *Ray's* stern tubes resulted in hits on a tanker, and possibly a minelayer. During the ensuing confusion, *Ray* escaped by running at flank speed on the surface. Overtaking the disorganized convoy, during a tropical squall the next day, *Ray* fired on two radar contacts scoring hits. When the weather cleared, *Ray* saw one ship whose stack was going under and whose bow was rising from the water. The second was enveloped in a cloud of smoke and her decks awash. *Ray* dived deep to escape Japanese patrol aircraft, and the sinking was never confirmed by captured records. As no further suitable contacts were found, the submarine returned to Fremantle, arriving on 14 June.

Her fifth patrol, 9 July to 31 August 1944, in the South China Sea and off the Philippines, drew blood on 18 July when *Ray* sank the tanker *Janbi Maru*. During the engagement, the submarine fired 22 torpedoes during six separate runs on the tanker which fired at *Ray* with her deck gun. *Ray* returned to Fremantle to reload, before returning to sea on 28 July. At the south entrance to Makassar Strait, SS-271 intercepted a convoy of three ships and sank the cargo ship *Koshu Maru*. Nine days later, she scored damaging hits on a transport and sank cargo ship *Zuisho Maru*. On 18 August, off northern Balabac Strait, Philippines, *Ray* closed a large convoy protected by surface escorts and planes, fired six "tin fish" at a tanker, and dived as a destroyer raced in to counterattack. Heavy explosions were heard, and a 2½-hour depth charge pounding followed. During the action, *Ray* heard another violent explosion and the sounds of a ship breaking up, as the tanker *Nansei Maru* went down. The submarine surfaced that evening and pursued the convoy into Palawan Bay. Air cover prevented a daylight attack, but the wolfpack of *Ray*, *Harder* (SS-257), and *Haddo* (SS-255) waited for the ships to come out. *Ray* fired her four remaining torpedoes at a passenger-cargo ship. Three fish missed, but the fourth hit the *Taketoyo Maru* amidships. The escorts forced *Ray* to dive, but she heard the 7,000 ton cargo vessel break up. The submarine underwent a sustained depth charge pounding, but escaped serious damage, returning to Fremantle 31 August.

The submarine's sixth war patrol, 23 September to 8 December, took her to the familiar waters of the South China Sea. On 6 and 7 October, she twice torpedoed a tanker, inflicting undetermined damage. Five days later, she destroyed the cargo ship *Toko Maru* with two direct hits and escaped a subsequent depth charge attack. On 14 October, while making a crash dive to escape a Japanese patrol plane, *Ray's* conning tower was flooded by an improperly secured hatch, but she was brought under control before reaching 85 feet. However, the damage forced the submarine to put into Mios Woendi for repairs during the last week of October.

On the afternoon of 1 November, *Ray* closed a five-ship convoy, sinking the cargo ship *Horai Maru No. 7*, and damaging a small tanker. Escaping the escorts, she landed men and supplies on the west coast of Mindoro, Philippines, picking up two downed Navy

fliers, two Army POW's escaped from Corregidor, and an escaped Filipino political prisoner. On the night of 4 November, the sub sighted a cargo ship with its superstructure aflame, from an earlier attack by *Bream* (SS-243). She fired two torpedoes, scoring a hit amidships and blowing away the bow of the *Kagu Maru*. On 6 November, SS-271 intercepted a convoy of two heavy cruisers, and several transports, protected by surface and air escorts. *Ray* fired six torpedoes at the cruiser *Kumano*, damaged earlier by *Raton* (SS-270). *Ray* was forced to dive to escape aerial and surface attack, and grounded in shoal water, shearing off her starboard sound head and blowing the sound head cable back into the torpedo room. To prevent further flooding, the submarine came to periscope depth where she saw the bowless cruiser being towed away by a transport. Her own damage and the Japanese escorts kept *Ray* from following up the attack. *Kumano* was destroyed off Luzon by Navy carrier planes 25 November.

On the night of 14 November, *Ray* made a surface attack on a three-ship convoy, blowing up an 800-ton frigate with a direct hit in its magazines. Two days later she fired two torpedoes at a grounded transport, but could not complete the attack because of minefields and shoal water. On 19 November, she rescued a downed pilot from *Cowpens* (CVL-25). The patrol terminated at Pearl Harbor 8 December 1944. From there the submarine headed east, arriving Mare Island Naval Shipyard 16 December for a major overhaul. Departing San Francisco 26 March, she proceeded via Pearl Harbor to Guam, arriving at Apra Harbor on 29 April 1945.

Ray cleared Guam for her seventh war patrol 30 April to 16 June 1945. On 7 May while on lifeguard duty off Kyushu, she rescued 10 men from a downed B-29. On the night of 15-16 May, she picked up the 10 crewmen of a PBM Mariner patrol bomber which was foundering in heavy seas. *Ray* transferred the rescued crews to *Lionfish* (SS-298) and *Pompon* (SS-267) and continued her patrol. On 19 May, she intercepted three small freighters. Her torpedoes ran beneath the targets; and the "freighters," a disguised hunter-killer group, converged on the area where *Ray* had dived, laying a depth charge pattern. The submarine surfaced and fired her deck gun at her pursuers as she dashed away at flank speed. The remainder of the patrol was devoted to attacking patrol craft and coastal vessels with gunfire until it ended at Midway on 16 June.

Her eighth and final wartime patrol, 11 July to 13 August, took *Ray* to the Gulf of Siam. On the evening of 7 August, she sank 16 small craft by gunfire off Bang Saponnoi, Thailand. That night two boarding parties from the submarine burned seven junks anchored north of Lem Chong Pra. The submarine arrived at Subic for more ammunition on 13 August, where her patrol was terminated. Departing the next day, she proceeded via Saipan for home via Pearl Harbor and the Panama Canal, arriving at New London, Conn., on 5 October 1945.

She served in a training capacity at New London until 12 February 1947, when she was placed out of commission in reserve. In December 1950, she was towed to Philadelphia Navy Yard for conversion to a radar picket submarine. Redesignated SSR-271 on 3 January 1951, she was recommissioned 13 August 1952, Lt. Comdr. A. C. Burley in command.

Ray departed Philadelphia 27 March 1953. The remainder of the year was occupied in fleet training operations along the east coast and in the Caribbean.

From 1 March to 26 May 1954, she deployed to the 6th Fleet, serving as a picket ship. Returning to her homeport of Norfolk 26 May, she participated in joint United States-Canadian exercises off Nova Scotia in July and August. The remainder of 1954 and 1955 were spent in fleet exercises, type training, and an overhaul at Charleston Navy Yard from April to November 1955. Deploying again to the Mediterranean as a radar picket submarine from 5 March to 4 June 1956, she operated with NATO and U.S. Navy units. The remaining months of *Ray's* operating schedule in 1956 and 1957 were involved in type training and fleet exercises in the Atlantic and Caribbean, including representing Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, at the International Naval Review at Hampton Roads in June 1957 and participating in the NATO Exercise "Strikeback" held off Scotland, France, and Portugal in September and October 1957. The early part of 1958 was spent in fleet exercises off the east coast and the Caribbean. She departed Norfolk 30 June 1958 and entered the Charleston Navy Yard for inactivation. She was placed out of commission in reserve on 30 September 1958, and was struck from the Navy list on 1 April 1960. Her hulk was sold for scrap to the Commercial Metals Co., 18 December 1960.

Ray was awarded seven battle stars and the Philippine Republic Presidential [sic; Presidential] Unit Citation for action in World War II.