



Baya (SS 318) was laid down on 8 April 1943 at Groton, Conn., by the Electric Boat Company; launched on 2 January 1944; sponsored by Mrs. Charles C. Kirkpatrick; and commissioned on 20 May 1944, Comdr. Arnold H. Holtz in command.

Following a month of sea trials and training off the New England coast, the submarine departed New London on 25 June. As she proceeded via the Panama Canal to Hawaii, she continuously drilled and conducted exercises to hone her battle skills. At Pearl Harbor, *Baya* carried out a final round of training before embarking on her first war patrol in company with *Becuna* (SS-319) and *Hawkbill* (SS-366) on 23 August. After a brief stop at Saipan for fuel, the three boats proceeded to the Palau Islands where they joined two other coordinated attack groups in intelligence gathering missions in support of the forces invading the islands. The reconnaissance group shifted position several times as it gathered information for Admiral Halsey's 3d Fleet; but, for the submarines on patrol, it proved only a month of fighting heavy seas while not encountering any enemy shipping.

During the night of 25 September, while patrolling in Luzon Strait, *Baya* submerged to avoid discovery by an enemy airplane. She surfaced in rough seas about 30 minutes later. The executive officer, engineering officer, and quartermaster were topside when a large wave crashed over *Baya*'s stern, washing the three men overboard and flooding the submarine through the conning tower hatch. The boat sank to 45 feet before the hatch was secured. Her superb crew, fortunately at battle stations already, drained the conning tower, surfaced, and recovered the men inside half an hour. Repairs took a few hours at most, and *Baya* soon returned to her patrol.

On 7 October while prowling the South China Sea, she encountered the only significant contact of the patrol when her radar detected three ships--an 8,407-ton cargo ship, later identified as *Kinugasa Maru*, accompanied by two escorts, part of Japanese convoy HI-77. *Hawkbill* and *Baya*, each aware of the others' presence in the area but unaware that they are attacking the same ship, both joined in an attack on the merchantman. *Hawkbill*'s first salvo missed, but *Baya*'s scored two hits. On her next try, *Hawkbill* also struck home with two torpedoes; and, seconds later, *Kinugasa Maru* exploded and disappeared.

On the 9th, *Baya* departed the South China Sea and headed for Fremantle in western Australia, where she arrived on 22 October. After a short refit and training period, she got underway for her second war patrol, forming an attack group with *Cavalla* (SS-244) and *Hoe* (SS-258) in the South China Sea. In four separate incidents between 8 and 10 December, *Baya* made contact with three destroyers and a hospital ship but failed to achieve a suitable attack position on any of the warships, and the hospital ship enjoyed immunity from attack. After that series of contacts, the submarine took station in a scouting line deployed off Mindoro Island between 14 and 25 December. While shifting to the west on 27 December, *Baya* sighted an enemy task force consisting

of two heavy cruisers and four destroyers attempting to retreat from the Philippines. She closed for attack, fired a full spread of torpedoes at the leading cruiser, but made no hits. Soon thereafter, she received orders to Australia, and the submarine arrived at Fremantle on 12 January 1945.

After refit alongside *Anthedon* (AS-24), *Baya* put to sea once again on 19 February, this time in company with *Hammerhead* (SS-364), and proceeded to a patrol area off Cap Varella, French Indochina. They sighted no significant targets until 4 March, when a five-ship Japanese convoy, HI-98--a tanker, a freighter, and three escorts--appeared on her radar scope. Numerous sailboats hampered *Baya* as she attempted to approach the targets, and a calm, moonlit sea gave the advantage to her adversaries. However, two of the six torpedoes that she fired struck *Palembang Maru*, and that tanker exploded in a tremendous blaze. Two others hit the freighter, but *Baya* could not determine the extent of damage she caused because the escorts drove her deep depth charges. The submarine emerged from the encounter unscathed and then shifted her attention to the Camranh Bay area.

Two hours before the start of the mid watch, on 20 March, she contacted a single ship leaving Phan Rang Bay. Just after midnight, the submarine fired a three-torpedo salvo from her stern tubes and scored one hit that sank the auxiliary netlayer *Kainan Maru*. Later that morning, *Baya* fired another stern tube salvo at a convoy of two destroyer escorts and a submarine chaser leaving Phan Rang Bay, but her luck did not hold. Her torpedoes missed and she had to dive to avoid the resulting depth charge counterattack that shook up the boat. Ordered to the newly liberated Subic Bay in the Philippines, *Baya* arrived there on 27 March for repairs and a refit alongside the tender *Howard W. Gilmore* (AS-16).

Baya got underway with Cavalla on 20 April to return to Camranh Bay, where, besides routine submerged patrolling, they were assigned lifeguard duties in support of air strikes over Saigon. On 2 May, *Baya* joined *Lagarto* (SS-371) in the Gulf of Siam just north of Singapore. The next night, she began tracking a convoy made up of two gasoline tankers and two escorts. The submarine maneuvered into position, fired her bow tubes, but the attack proved unsuccessful. The leading escort--a mine-layer--gave chase, but *Baya* quickly eluded her pursuer. The following day, *Baya* rendezvoused with *Lagarto* to plan a coordinated attack on the convoy. The convoy's unusually alert escorts frustrated the efforts of the two submarines, and no opportunities for attack presented themselves that day. Early the next morning *Lagarto* tried to attack the convoy from a position 12 miles away from *Baya*. Afterward, *Baya* attempted to contact her colleague but her calls went unanswered. *Lagarto* never returned from that mission, Japanese records indicated that the mine-layer *Hatsutaka* sank a submarine in that location at that time. *Lagarto* was presumed lost with all hands.

Baya shifted her patrol to the Java Sea, where she attacked a three-ship Palembang-bound convoy off Rembang on 13 May. The submarine chose a tanker as her first target and scored three hits with a spread of six torpedoes. She then aimed her stern tubes at the escort, and scored two hits. To make a clean sweep, she fired her two remaining torpedoes into the freighter and retired leaving the tanker *Yosei Maru* sinking and the other two ships severely damaged. The guardboat No.17 *Shonan Maru* carried out an unsuccessful counterattack on *Baya*; one of the ships *Baya* claimed to have sunk, however, the tanker *Enoshima Maru*, had in fact, emerged unscathed. Five days later, *Baya* reached Fremantle for a refit alongside *Clytie* (AS-26).

A fire in the maneuvering room delayed the submarine's fifth patrol; but, after repairs had been completed, she got underway on 20 June. At the beginning of the patrol, *Baya* operated south of Cape Selatan in support of Allied landings at Balikpapan, Borneo. On 27 June, she intercepted a single minelayer but the torpedoes she launched failed to hit the target. On 29 and 30 June, *Baya* and *Capitaine* (SS-336) conducted a coordinated gun attack on five small craft. Heavy return fire ended this engagement before *Baya* could add another sinking to her record.

Baya performed lifeguard duties in the Java Sea during the first half of July and then continued her patrols in that same area. On 16 July, she torpedoed and sank the Ōtori-class torpedo boat *Kari*, then en route from Surabaya to Ambon, with two torpedoes; two officers, 22 men, and one civilian passenger ultimately reached Masalamo Besar two days later. After an unsuccessful gun attack on another enemy patrol craft, the submarine

received orders to Subic Bay on 26 July. She reached her destination five days later and moored alongside *Anthedon* (AS-24).

Two weeks after Japan capitulated, *Baya* set her course for the California coast and, on 24 September, steamed under the Golden Gate Bridge as part of Admiral Halsey's symbolic parade. She remained in the San Francisco area until she was decommissioned on 14 May 1946 and placed in reserve at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard. After less than two years of inactivity, *Baya* was reactivated for use as an electronics experimental submarine. She was recommissioned on 10 February 1948, Comdr. John D. Mason in command. All torpedo loading and stowage equipment was removed at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard to make room for Naval Electronics Laboratory (NEL) personnel and equipment. Reclassified AGSS-318 on 12 August 1949, *Baya* served as an underwater "guinea pig" in tests involving both antisubmarine and pro-submarine devices as well as subsurface oceanographic research. Besides participating in operations near San Diego, her new home port, the submarine served as a member of a joint American-Canadian task force gathering scientific data off western Canada in November and December of 1948. She also cruised to the Arctic to gather data in the Bering and Chukchi Seas.

In April 1953, *Baya* began an overhaul at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and, upon completing it, resumed her duties in support of underwater electronics research, which occupied her throughout 1954 and for most of 1955. In December of 1955, she commenced overhaul at the San Francisco Naval Shipyard to update her capabilities for NEL testing. *Baya* operated out of San Diego and Pearl Harbor for the rest of her career. She served in the Vietnam war zone for two months in 1966 in conjunction with sonar research operations for NEL and in submerged visibility studies for the Naval Oceanographic Office. In 1968, she commenced a series of tests for the Operational Test and Evaluation Force, Pacific, and the Naval Undersea Warfare Center. In 1971, *Baya* performed research in the Gulf of Alaska before returning to San Diego in December. In April 1972, the submarine made one last cruise to Pearl Harbor to conduct sonar experiments before returning to San Diego. She also conducted a one-day cruise to film an episode of Lloyd Bridges's television show "Sea Hunt."

Baya was decommissioned at San Diego on 30 October 1972, and her name was struck from the Navy list. Sold for scrapping to National Metal and Steel Corp., of Terminal Island, Calif., she was delivered to that firm on 23 October 1973.

Baya earned four battle stars during World War II and two battle stars for service in the Vietnam combat zone.

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