



USS Menhaden (SS-377)

A marine fish of the herring family which, as the most abundant of fishes along the Atlantic coast, is found from New England waters southward; the fish is caught for bait or converted into oil and fertilizer. SP-947 retained her former name.

(SS-377: dp. 1,526 (surf.), 2,424 (subm.); l. 311'9"; b. 27'3"; dr. 15'3"; s. 20 k. (surf.), 9 k. (subm.); cpl. 66; a. 1 5", 1 40mm., 10 21" tt.; cl. *Balao*)

The second *Menhaden* (SS-377) was laid down by Manitowoc Shipbuilding Co., Manitowoc, Wis., 21 June 1944; launched 20 December 1944; sponsored by Miss Mirium R. Johnson and commissioned at Manitowoc 22 June 1945, Comdr. David H. McClintock in command.

Skipped by Commander McClintock and manned by sailors from the redoubtable *Darter* (SS-227), *Menhaden*, the last of the Manitowoc-built boats to have commissioned service during World War II, trained in Lake Michigan until 15 July. Thence, she was floated down the Mississippi River to New Orleans where she departed for the Canal Zone 27 July. She conducted extensive training out of Balboa

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during the closing days of the war against Japan, and between 1 and 16 September cruised to Pearl Harbor for duty with SubRon 19.

On 24 November *Menhaden* broke the flag of Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, CINCPAC and CINCPACFLT. Fleet Admiral Nimitz had selected *Menhaden* as his flagship during change of Command ceremonies, for she combined the new with the old. Although untried in combat, she was one of the newest boats in the Submarine Service and incorporated the latest improvements in submarine design and equipment. Moreover her “gallantly battle-tested” crew epitomized the “valor, skill, and dedicated service of submariners” during the long Pacific war. Thus, on her deck that morning Fleet Admiral Nimitz read his orders assigning him to duty as Chief of Naval Operations, and his relief, Adm. Raymond A. Spruance, read orders making him CINCPAC and CINCPACFLT.

Menhaden operated out of Pearl Harbor until 2 January 1946 when she sailed for the west coast, arriving San Francisco the 8th. Following inactivation overhaul at Mare Island, she decommissioned 31 May 1946 and entered the Pacific Reserve Fleet. She recommissioned at Mare Island 7 August 1951, Lt. Comdr. Ralph G. Johns, Jr., in command. Assigned to SubRon 5, she operated along the west coast out of San Diego during the next year. She again decommissioned at Mare Island 13 August 1952 and began “Guppy IIA” overhaul and conversion to a snorkel submarine.

Menhaden recommissioned 6 March 1953, Lt. Comdr. William R. Werner in command. She joined SubRon 3 at San Diego 12 June, and on 21 September she sailed for the Far East. Operating out of Yokosuka, she ranged the East and South China Seas until 11 February 1954; thence, she returned to San Diego 23 March. For the next year and a half she operated in the eastern Pacific where she participated in fleet readiness exercises and type training assignments. On 18 August 1955 she began her second deployment to WesPac where she joined and supported the ever-vigilant Taiwan patrol force. She returned to the west coast 17 February 1956.

Since 1955 *Menhaden* has completed six more deployments in the troubled waters of the Far East. As a unit of SubDiv 32, she cruised the western Pacific from Japan and Taiwan to the Philippines and Australia. She carried out surveillance and reconnaissance patrols off past and present areas of cold war conflict from Korea to Vietnam. She has acted with skill, diligence, and dispatch while serving as both a weapon of war and an instrument of peace. Her valuable support of and contributions to the mighty 7th Fleet have bolstered this versatile force which, as the powerful seagoing arm of freedom in the Far East, has contained communism and thwarted its spread in Southeast Asia.

When not deployed in the western Pacific, *Menhaden* has maintained a schedule of intensive readiness and alert exercises. Home ported at San Diego, she has participated in numerous fleet and intertype exercises. In addition, she has supported sonar school operations and has provided vital at sea training for members of the Navy’s Submarine Reserve Force.

Early in 1968 *Menhaden* returned to the western Pacific and gave visible meaning to the might of American seapower. During a 6-month deployment she concentrated her operations in the troubled waters of Southeast Asia as the United States increased the effort to protect and defend the independence and integrity of South Vietnam from aggression of the North Vietnamese Communists. Later in the year she returned to the west coast where she continued to prepare for future “keeping-the-peace” missions. Into 1969 her training and deployments remain vital to the defense of the Nation and the free world and clearly demonstrate to friend and foe alike that the influence of U.S. seapower grows stronger as the cold war grows longer.