

World War II
Diary of
ROBERT LOYD WINNE

U.S.S. NATOMA BAY
CVE 62

August 21, 1944
Through
June 23, 1945

(transcribed by his daughter-in-law, Pat Winne)

Monday, Aug. 21, 1944

I came aboard the U.S.S. Natoma Bay CVE 62. Ship board life seemed very confusing to me. She is one of Kaisers' baby flat tops. Carrying 12 torpedo planes and 20 fighter planes, and a crew of eight hundred men. Spent the day rushing around and getting my gear established.

Tuesday, Aug. 22, 1944

The day started off with reveille at 0600. Was left to more or less roam the ship at will, to get acquainted with the lay out. Chow was much better aboard, that was some consolation any way. The ventilation is very poor, making living conditions rather bad. Rated liberty so went over to Bill and Helen's and spent a quiet evening. Taps 2100.

Wednesday, Aug. 27 [23], 1944

We shoved off for a day's trial run off the coast of California. My first taste of the sea from a real sailor's angle. The rolling made me feel strange at first, but I didn't get sick. Got back in San Diego late that evening.

Thursday, Aug. 23 [24], 1944

Took on supplies and made ready for putting out to sea. Had the duty and stayed aboard that evening.

Friday, Aug. 24 [25], 1944

Sailing day arrived. Shoved off at 0730 for Pearl Harbor.

Saturday, Aug. 25 [26], 1944

Second day at sea uneventful. Am beginning to know my way around the ship now and getting acclimated to ship board life.

Sunday, Aug. 26 [27], 1944

Still under way for Pearl. Uneventful day. On holiday routine - no work.

Monday, Aug. 27 [28], 1944

Arrived in Pearl Harbor. A beautiful sight. Saw the remains of the U.S.S. Oklahoma which still lays where she was sunk by the Japs on December 7, 1941. Hawaii was beautiful although it doesn't live up to my expectations. Saw movies aboard tonight. Taps 2200.

Tuesday, Aug. 28 [29], 1944

Took on supplies for more trial runs off Hawaii. Lots of work today. Am dog tired tonight. No liberty.

Wednesday, Aug. 29 [30], 1944

More work today. Still no liberty. Saw movies again tonight.

Thursday, Aug. 31, 1944

Took on bombs and ammo. The hardest day's work yet. Taps 2200.

Friday, Sept. 1, 1944

More bombs and ammo. Still no liberty. Was getting anxious to get ashore.

Saturday, Sept. 22, 1944

Got paid today, first since leaving the states.

Sunday, Sept. 3, 1944

No work today, wrote letters and read. Saw movies in the evening.

Monday, Sept. 4, 1944

Labor day and liberty. Leo Pagni and I went in to Honolulu. The crowds of sailors were terrific. Looked the town over and went out to Waikiki Beach to the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. Very pretty. Took a swim. Went back to Ford Island and drank some beer. Was back aboard at 1800 with some souvenirs I picked up. Taps 2200.

Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1944

Spent the day preparing for putting out to sea for a week's trial run.

Wednesday, Sept. 6, 1944

Shoved off at 0800 for trial runs. Squadron flew out to join us at sea. Had gunnery practice for ship's gunners. Taps 2000.

Thursday, Sept. 7, 1944 - Tuesday, Sept 12, 1944

[Nothing written]

Wednesday, Sept. 13, 1944

Pulled back in to Pearl at 0930. No liberty today. Started to take on supplies. Also held field day.

Thursday, Sept. 14, 1944

Still taking on supplies. Preparing to shove off in the morning for Einwetok [sic]. Another hard working day over.

Friday, Sept. 15, 1944

Shoved off for Einwetok [sic] at 0630. It's about a seven day trip they tell me.

Saturday, Sept. 16, 1944

Flight quarters at 0730. Flew anti-sub patrol four hours. Uneventful day.

Sunday, Sept. 17, 1944

Still at sea, uneventful day. Flew anti-sub patrol in afternoon.

Monday, Sept. 18, 1944

Uneventful day at sea. More anti-sub patrol in morning.

Tuesday, Sept. 19, 1944

More anti-sub patrol in afternoon

Wednesday, Sept. 20, 1944

More anti-sub. Also, torpedo plane no. 27 went over the side. All hands were saved.

Thursday, Sept. 21, 1944

More anti-sub. Nearing Einwetok [sic].

Friday, Sept. 22, 1944

Arrived in Einwetok [sic] at 1600. It was a big harbor surrounded by a bunch of small atolls. Harbor is about 30 miles across. We anchored about ten miles off shore. Couldn't see much. Not much to see any way. Had movies tonight.

Saturday, Sept. 23, 1944

Took on more supplies today preparing to shove off for the Admiralties south of the equator.

Sunday, Sept. 24, 1944

Shoved off for Manus, main island of the Admiralties at 0600.

Monday, Sept. 25, 1944

Back at sea again. More anti-sub patrol.

Tuesday, Sept. 26, 1944

Still at sea. More anti-sub. Contacted enemy sub but lost it.

Wednesday, Sept. 27, 1944

More anti-sub patrol. Sea was extra rough today.

Thursday, Sept. 28, 1944

Still at sea. More anti-sub.

Friday, Sept. 29, 1944

Field day and more anti-sub.

Saturday, Sept 30, 1944

One day out from port all hands anxious to see land. More anti-sub. Was initiated into Royal Order of Shellback. What a beating we took.

Card:

DOMAIN OF NEPTUNUS REX
 Know ye that Robert L. Winne AOM_
 on this 1st day of October 1944 aboard the
 U.S.S. Natoma Bay Latitude 00-00, Longitude
 censored appeared into Our Royal Domain and
 having been inspected and found worthy by My
 Royal Staff, was initiated into the
 Solemn Mysteries of the Ancient Order of the Deep
 I command my subjects to honor and respect this
 bearer of this certificate as One of Our Trusty
 Shellbacks.
 J. S. Hurlbrest (?) A. J. Moorehouse
 Davy Jones Neptunus Rex
 [last line unreadable]

Sunday, Oct. 1, 1944

Pulled in Manus Harbor at 1100. A big harbor. The island is very large, but no cities on it. We got mail first time since leaving Pearl Harbor. Had movies this evening.

Monday, Oct. 2, 1944

Took on more supplies today, we are all wondering where we are going. Movies again tonight.

Tuesday, Oct 3, 1944

Still taking on supplies. Still wondering about our destination. Movies.

Wednesday, Oct. 4, 1944

Still in port. Rated liberty today. There is a recreation center on Pitiylu [Peletiu] Island where we can get two cans of beer apiece and play ball. Movies.

Thursday, Oct 5, 1944

Taking life pretty easy. Most supplies are aboard. Movies.

Friday, Oct 6, 1944

Still waiting for something. We are all ready to go into action. It will most likely be the invasion of the Philippines. Just a guess.

Saturday, Oct 7, 1944

Still waiting orders. Had an Admiral's inspection today. I passed OK. Ought to, I had all new clothes on! Movies.

Sunday, Oct. 8, 1944

Today is a rope yarn Sunday, no work. The latest scuttlebutt is that we leave here the 12th. Movies tonight. Didn't go.

Monday, Oct 9, 1944

Looks pretty definite we go to Philippines about the 12th. Went on recreation party again today. Was lucky, got four cans of beer. Movies again tonight.

Tuesday, Oct. 10, 1944

Cleaned up all the guns on the planes today and rigged bomb bays for action. Movies.

Wednesday, Oct 11, 1944

Preparing for sea, leaving at 1300 for Leyte Gulf for operations.

Thursday, Oct 12, 1944

Left port today for our first operation. More anti-sub patrol.

Friday, Oct. 13, 1944

Still underway. It is about a four day trip to Leyte Gulf. More anti-sub.

Saturday, Oct. 14, 1944

We are scheduled to hit Leyte on the 17th to begin bombing. More anti-sub patrol.

Sunday, Oct. 15, 1944

A light day today. One anti-sub hop. L. Pagni went to sick bay for appendicitis.

Monday, Oct. 16, 1944

Are caught in the midst of a typhoon. The waves are mountainous. All are worried as to whether the ship will hold together. No flying.

Tuesday, Oct. 17, 1944

Typhoon still rages, ship is riding her out beautifully. The Leyte strike is delayed till weather clears. Pagni was operated on this morning. Hope he makes it all OK.

Wednesday, Oct. 18, 1944

Storm broke during the night and we struck Leyte at day light. Worked from before dawn till after midnight. Am dog tired.

Thursday, Oct. 19, 1944

Up at 0400 and ready to get to work again. First bombing hop got off at daylight. Loaded another hop. Targets are scarce. Don't look like the Japs have too much over there. No air resistance as yet. Worked till 2200. Thought I was tired last night but tonight I'm really tired. No rest in sight either.

Friday, Oct. 20, 1944

More bombing today. Up at 0400 to lead 2nd mission. The army lands today at dawn - MacArthur's troops. Army ran into opposition but we still have had no air attacks. Worked until 2100 tonight. Am so worn out I wonder if I'll be able to go on.

Saturday, Oct. 21, 1944

Still bombing and strafing Leyte. Army is doing pretty good, have established a beach head. Also took the little island of Samar in Leyte Gulf. Turned in at 2400.

Sunday, Oct. 22, 1944

Still bombing. Am so tired that I just go around half asleep. No rest in sight yet. Saw a couple of Jap observation planes but were out of range fire. Worked from 0330 till 2300 today.

Monday, Oct. 23, 1944

Up at 0430 and turned too. We are grabbing meals when ever we can. Bombed all day besides giving fighter support to the Army. Japs are putting up quite a bit of resistance, but the Army is moving farther inland. Still no attacks on us. Turned in at 2100. Never knew I could be so tired and still carry on.

Tuesday, Oct. 24, 1944

Up at 0415, more bomb loading. So tired now I wish I could pass out. Still bombing and strafing. No trouble as yet. Turned in at 2200.

Wednesday, Oct 25, 1944

A day I shall never forget. Was awakened at 0400. The Captain passed the word that during the night, the Jap fleet had slipped through the San Bernadino Straits and were all around us. The Japs were making about 30 knots to our 17 knots. We were really on the spot. At 0800 we could see the superstructures of the Jap battleships on the horizon and the big shells were landing about 100 yards to our stern. We sent our first wave to torpedo planes. The take off was risky, for we dared not turn into the wind for it would close the gap between us at a speed of 40 knots. Got the planes off down wind all OK. We have only six torpedoes aboard. The pilots had orders to go for wagons and cruisers. Torpedo runs were very successful. One sunk a cruiser of the Atogo class. Lt. Vogt of Chicago got the credit for the kill. All other torpedoes got a hit but one. We had a Jap battle wagon dead in the water with about 40 destroyers around her protecting her from attack. We loaded hop and hop with bombs, as fast as the planes could take off, drop their load, and land again. The U.S.S. Princeton took some direct hits which put her out of commission. The U.S.S. St. Lo's engines gave out and she was easy prey for the Japs. The U.S. S. Midway also took some hits which sent her to the bottom. Our bombs and torpedoes finally told on the Jap forces for they turned and headed back toward the Straits again. Were we relieved. Also Halsey's fleet came from the north and intercepted them about six hours after we were first attacked. Our squadron got credit for one cruiser and one destroyer. A good day. The loss of men on the carrier sunk has not yet been determined. We are awfully lucky that the Japs did not have any air support or it

would probably been the end of CVE 62 and several other carriers in our force. Tonight I'm so tired I can hardly stand up. But the excitement of the day, and our good fortune, kept everyone going. Hit the rack at 2000.

Thursday, Oct. 26, 1944

Continued bombing and strafing. The planes found a convoy of Jap trucks loaded with soldiers headed for our beach head. They strafed and bombed them till their forced scattered to the woods. Turned in at 2300. Oh yes, we refueled while underway today.

Friday, Oct 27, 1944

Oh happy days! We are turning back to Manus. Our bombs are expended and the Army has established an air strip on Leyte and can do their own air coverage. Just one anti-sub hop today. Tonight we get some rest and everyone is absolutely worn out. Turned in at 1800.

Saturday, Oct. 28, 1944

I've slept and slept and still feel all worn out. My bones even creak when I walk. Are still underway for Manus. More anti-sub patrol today. Turned in at 2000.

Sunday, Oct 29, 1944

Reveille at 0430. General quarters till one hour after sun up. Just a routine day with anti-sub patrol. Turned in at 1800.

Monday, Oct. 30, 1944

Up at 0430. General quarters and regular routine anti-sub. Getting some rest now. Weighted myself today and found I lost 30 lbs. during the Leyte strike. Hit the rack at 1900.

Tuesday, Oct. 31, 1944

Up at 0430 and preparing to enter port. Does Manus ever look good. Dropped anchor at 0945. Movies tonight. Tattoo at 2200.

Wednesday, Nov. 1, 1944

Started taking on supplies, mostly food stuffs. We all dread the thought of needing a full load of bombs. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Thursday, Nov. 2, 1944

Up at 0630. Brought part of our bombs aboard today. Lots of work involved. Rated recreation part on Pitiylu [Peleliu] today, my two cans of beer were really good, also had a good swim and hunted shells. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Friday, Nov. 3, 1944

Up at 0630. Captain commended all hands on their good work and conducting themselves in a military manner under stress of battle. Ordnance department got special commendation for their efforts. Not much work today. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Saturday, Nov. 4, 1944

Up at 0630. More supplies came aboard. Lots of Australian lamb. Looks like our diet will be mostly lamb. Movies. Tattoo 2200. [Bob Winne had so much lamb he refused to eat it when he became a civilian.]

Sunday, Nov. 5, 1944

Up at 0630. Another rope yarn Sunday - no work. Spent the day writing letters and reading. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Monday, Nov. 6, 1944

Still in port. Spent day cleaning and painting all our spaces. Also took examination for 1st class. I know I passed it. Whether I get it or not depends on whether Sassano makes chief, for there is no openings for 1st. Movies. Tattoo 200 [2200?].

Tuesday, Nov. 7, 1944

Up at 0630. Not much doing today. Went on recreation party for a swim. No beer was available. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 1944

Still in port and wondering when we are going to be shoving off and where. Understand the army is having a tough battle on Leyte. Japs have run in air support and reinforcements. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Thursday, Nov. 9, 1944

Up at 0630. Went on working party to the Mount Hood, an ammo ship, to get the rest of our bombs. Looks like pretty good duty on one of those tugs. Had a hard day. Turned in before movies.

Friday, Nov. 10, 1944

Up at 0630. Was to go over to Mount Hood for more bombs. While standing morning quarters a terrific explosion knocking some of us flat on the deck occurred. It was the Mount Hood blown sky high. Over 500 men were killed. I'm thanking Almighty God that our working party had not gotten on board before the blast. Several ships were damaged near by. No work for that day. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Saturday, Nov. 11, 1944

Up at 0630. Captain's inspection for all hands on the flight deck. Also inspections of all ship's spaces. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Sunday, Nov. 12, 1944

Reveille 0630. Another rope yarn Sunday. Rate recreation party. No beer today. The wrap leggings were there in the morning and cleaned out the beer. Swam and hunted shells. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Monday, Nov. 13, 1944

Up at usual 0630. Got the rest of our bombs today. Thank God we have the magazines full. Also took on 9 torpedoes, 3 more than we carried before. Everyone is getting restless and anxious to shove off. Scuttlebutt is that our next operation will take us into the Surigao Straights and through the Mindanao Sea into the Sulu Sea. I hope it's wrong cause that looks like suicide to me. That is all surrounded by Jap territory. Must be bum dope. I hope. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 1944

Up at 0630. Well, I got my first class rating today. Luck was with me - Sassano made chief. Passed out the cigars. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Wednesday, Nov. 15, 1944

Up at 0630. Was transferred temporarily for duty on shore at Pitiylu [Peleliu] air strip with our squadron who is on the beach for our stay in Manus Harbor. We are housed in a Quonset hut right on the beach. Nice and cool at night. Lights out at 2200.

Thursday, Nov. 16, 1944

Up at 0700. Life is wonderful on the beach. Work on day, off one day. Spent the day looking around the came and swimming. It's great to be on good old terraferma once more. Lights out at 2200.

Friday, Nov. 17, 1944

Up at 0700. Did a little in the line of work today. Also had some beer at the rec. center after work. The food is not as good here as aboard ship. The water is almost undrinkable. Lights out at 2200.

Saturday, Nov. 18, 1944

Up at 1100. Day off. Swam, hunted shells, and relaxed in general. What a life. Lights out at 2200.

Sunday, Nov. 19, 1944

No work today. Holiday routine. More swimming. Movies. Lights out 2200.

Monday, Nov. 20, 1944

Up at 0600. Lots of work today. Took a hop on the gunnery range today. Like to fly off land but carrier landing and take offs get me down. Lights out 2200.

Tuesday, Nov. 21, 1944

Day off. Up at 1200. Swimming and took a rubber raft and went out to the reefs to hunt shells. Great sport! Lights [no more]

Wednesday, Nov. 22, 1944

Usual routine of work today. Met a chief I used to know in Jax. We had a long chat about old ship mates. Lights [no more]

Thursday, Nov. 23, 1944

Thanksgiving day. Holiday routine. Had turkey with all the trimmings. Pretty good considering. Lights [no more]

Friday, Nov. 24, 1944

Up at 0600. Went over to the ship for some mail. Got some packages from home. Lights [no more]

Saturday, Nov. 25, 1944

Uneventful day.

Sunday, Nov. 26, 1944

Spent the day talking to the natives. They say Jap no good. Also traded for some shells.

Monday, Nov. 27, 1944

Up at 0500. Got orders to return to ship. We were getting underway at 1330. Something special in the wind. Your guess is as good as mine as to what. Raised anchor at 1330. General quarters sundown. Taps 2000.

Tuesday, Nov. 28, 1944

Up at 0430. Squadron flew aboard at sun up. It was announced over the bull horn that we were bound for Palau. A three day trip. For what we did not know. Darken ship 1845.

Wednesday, Nov. 29, 1944

Up at 0430. Regular sea routine. Anti-sub patrol. Darken ship 1845.

Thursday, Nov. 30, 1944

Still underway for Castle Roads harbor, Palau. Regular anti-sub patrol. In rack at 1930.

Friday, Dec. 1, 1944

Arrived in Castle Roads Harbor. We anchored about 5 miles off shore. The island itself was held by 2200 Japs who only had small arms so were not dangerous to us. We dropped anchor at about 0645. Received warning that air raid was expected so we must put out to sea again. Shoved off at 0740. Lights out 2000.

Saturday, Dec. 2, 1944

Up at 0430. Position unknown to me, just somewhere at sea waiting to pull back into Castle Road. Anti-sub patrol. Racked out at 1800.

Sunday, Dec. 3, 1944

Still at sea. Just going in circles waiting orders and an all clear at Palau. Anti-sub.

Monday, Dec. 4, 1944

Ah, back to Palau. All clear. Anchored at 1030. Uneventful day. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Tuesday, Dec. 5, 1944

Took on supplies. Looks like we shall be here a few days. Would sure like to know what's up. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Wednesday, Dec. 6, 1944

Up at 0630. Regular working day getting planes in shape. Watched the army planes bomb Palau Island. Must be kind of hot over there for them.

Thursday, Dec. 7, 1944

Up at 0630. Got some mail today. Had sort of a vacation today indulged in sports on the flight deck. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Friday, Dec. 8, 1944

Four battle ships and six cruisers pulled into harbor today. Something big is in the wind. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Saturday, Dec. 9, 1944

More supplies came aboard today. The scuttlebutt is flying thick and fast. We are all wondering what's up. Is it the Sulu Sea or not? Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Sunday, Dec. 10, 1944

Up 0630. Another rope yarn Sunday. Loafed all day. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Monday, Dec. 11, 1944

Reveille 0500. We are shoving off at 0700. At last we will find out what's up. Had anti-sub patrol. Well, they announced our destination this p.m. We are taking a convoy through the Surigao Straits, Midanao Sea, and Sulu Sea to land troops on Mindoro. God be with us, for we shall be in waters never before entered by American ships since the war started. I know I'm sort of afraid and I think I'm not alone in that fear. We hit Leyte Gulf again day after tomorrow.

Tuesday, Dec. 12, 1944

Up at 0430. Regular sea routine. Anti-sub patrol. Killing time for rendezvous with convoy. Racked out at 1930.

Wednesday, Dec. 13, 1944

Up at 0430. Tonight we start through Straits. They average about 15 miles in the widest spot and are 9 miles in the narrowest parts. We are sneaking through under cover of darkness. We will be in range of shore batteries if they have any there. No sleep tonight, too nervous. Sat on flight deck. Could see land on both sides, though no moon was shining. Could see bonfires on shore. No gun fire from shore batteries.

Thursday, Dec. 14, 1944

Dawn found us in Mindanao Sea. All was going well, but the Japs would soon discover us. No action all day long. We had fighter cover over us and sent fighter cover over the convoy. We stayed on battle stations all day. 1700 the Japs hit us. We were taken without much warning for because of land on both sides, our radar limit was 12 miles. 26 Jap planes came at us on our starboard beam. The big stuff opened up on them first then our gunners as they came closer. One plane made a dive on us. Was shot up and exploded in mid-air. Another dived on a destroyer on our port quarter hitting amid ships, killing 2/3 of the crew and setting her a fire. Meanwhile, the battle wagons and cruisers were knocking down planes all around us. The battle only lasted about twenty minutes, but I was five years older. The crippled destroyer got under way again. Sundown was a welcome sight. This was just the beginning. Of the 26 planes that attacked, 26 were shot down. Another good day for us.

Friday, Dec. 15, 1944

Dawn found us on our battle stations. All was quiet again. We had been told about Japan's latest weapon, the Kamikaze Corp. special attack group. They are suicide pilots who dive their planes into ships, and carry explosives and inflammables. A mighty dangerous weapon. We, however, only half believed there was such an organization. At 1700 the general alarm rang again. There were six Jap dive bombers in the sun waiting till some ship was in good position. This was the Kamikazes in action. Each plane picked a target and started down with the sun at their tail. It was almost impossible to see them. They are a hard target for just hitting them don't stop them. You have to explode them in midair or they will get you anyway. The carrier Marcus Island had to dive on her one right behind the other. Both missed hitting the water right along side, the explosions blowing several men over the side. The others were shot down before they could get close enough to threaten any ships. Meanwhile, the Japs were attacking the convoy. At last the sun went down and blessed night covered us again. Another five years piled up on me. At night we had to worry at PT boat attacks, but luck was with us again. Six more Japs that won't fly again.

Saturday, Dec. 16, 1944

Up at 0230. On all battle stations. Fighters took off to cover convoy and us. Today we must kill time so we hit our destination at dawn tomorrow to land the army. Quiet all day except for Jap observation planes spotting out our position from time to time. Our nerves were on edge. 1700 Kamikaze time again. This time nine Vals were up in the sun. God was with us again. We got them all shot down before they could do us any harm. What a beautiful sight it is to see a Jap plane explode in the air and fall harmlessly into the sea. Darkness again. The convoy was under attack all night but we were helpless to aid them. Could see the tracers from the ships guns all night. Not much sleep tonight.

Sunday, Dec. 17, 1944

Up 0230 on battle stations again. Today the army went into the Mindoro at dawn. Our fighters went in to give them cover. 0800 the kamikazes were after us again. This time they came in so thick it was impossible to count them. We were under attack from 0800 until noon. We would beat off one group, I should say shoot them down, when another batch attacked. The cruisers and battle wagons kept such a heavy flack in the air that the Japs could not get in so very close. Plane after plane came down in flames. There were 12 successive attacks and every plane that came out to get us never went back. Seems to me Japan will soon be out of planes and pilots if they expend them all like that. The army landed with no ground resistance. We were to start back tonight. Oh happy days.

Monday, Dec. 18, 1944

Much to our horror we found that during the night we had been ordered to turn back to Mindoro and give them another day's air cover. The moral dropped considerably. Spent the day at battle stations. Our air cover shot down all the Jap planes before they could get in to attack us. Everyone's nerves were in an awful state. The nervous strain was terrific. At 1600 we got orders to head back to Palau - what wonderful words. Dropped on the flight deck to sleep at 2000.

Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1944

We woke to find ourselves in the Mindanao Sea. All was quiet, we went through the Straits in the afternoon without a sign of a Jap. Evidently they had no shore batteries on Mindanao or Bohol. Lucky for us. Hit Leyte Gulf at night and sailed for Palau.

Wednesday, Dec. 20, 1944

Arrived in Palau at 0830. She sure looked good to us. Could not get the supplies we needed so prepared to Sail for Manus for the following day.

Thursday, Dec. 21, 1944

Shoved off for Manus 0730. Regular sea routine. Anti-sub patrol. Racked in at 1930.

Friday, Dec. 22, 1944

Up at 0430. Anti-sub. Speed 18 knots for Manus. Scuttlebutt started spreading that we would go right out on another operation in a few days. My nerves were a mess. Noises that I never noticed before made me jumpy. Oh how I dreaded another operation. We got the news of the success of this operation today. The army was all established on Mindoro. The score of planes our task force shot down was 102 sures and 10 probables. A might nice feather in the cap of the 7th fleet. Our damage was two battle wagons hit by suiciders and one tin can. Not a bad piece of work.

Saturday, Dec. 23, 1944

Up 0430. Getting into Manus tomorrow morning. Anti-sub patrol today. Racked out 2000.

Sunday, Dec. 24, 1944

Up at 0430. Dropped the hook at 1045. Another rope yarn Sunday. Got lots of back mail today. Movies. Tattoo 2200. Oh yes, Xmas Eve. The chaplain had a little ship talent program. Also had a tree made of wood and pipe cleaners. Strangest creation I ever saw.

Monday, Dec. 25, 1944

Today is Xmas. Just another day. We were on working all day bringing on supplies for whatever was coming up next. Had a pretty good dinner. Worked until 2300. What was next no one knew. Tattoo 2200.

Tuesday, Dec. 26, 1944

Up at 0630. Continued to bring on supplies. We are shoving off in the morning for Castle Roads again so it looks like the Philippines again. Movies. Turned in 2100.

Wednesday, Dec. 27, 1944

Up at 0530. Raised the hook at 0715 bound for Palau. Six baby carriers and 18 tin cans. Anti-sub patrol. Darken ship 1750.

Thursday, Dec. 28, 1944

Reveille 0430. Anti-sub patrol. Uneventful day. In rack at 2030.

Friday, Dec. 29, 1944

Still under way for Palau. Due in at dawn. Anti-sub patrol. Everyone is trying to guess what is next. Racked out 2000.

Saturday, Dec. 30, 1944

Up 0430. Dropped anchor at 0645. The wagons and cruisers were in the harbor waiting for us. Refueled ship today. Also took on aviation gasoline. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Sunday, Dec. 31, 1944

Up at 0630. We are leaving tomorrow on the biggest and longest operation we have had yet, so Lt. Kerr told me. Spent the day getting the planes and guns in shape. Was some New Year's Eve. Went to bed at 2100. Tattoo 2200. Where are we going??

Monday, Jan. 1, 1945

Up at 0500. Raised hook at 0630. Everything is going with us - 7 battle wagons, 8 cruisers, and 30 cans. Looks like a big affair this time. We will soon know now. Anti-sub patrol today. Had a bad barrier crash, had to drop fighter no. 20 over the side. Racked out 2030.

Tuesday, Jan. 2, 1945

Are killing time today as we just got the word over the speaker that we would rendezvous with another convoy of troop ships. Our destination is Lingaeyen Gulf. About 150 miles north of Manila. Back into the Surigao Straits, Sulu Sea, and this time on up into the China Sea. We can expect most anything this time. The Admiral said he hoped we would run into the rest of the Jap fleet. I don't share that hope with him. I've seen all the Jap fleet I want.

Wednesday, Jan. 3, 1945

Up at 0430. Rendezvoused with rest of convoy. I never saw so many ships in my life, hundreds of troop transports. Also some more battle wagons and cruisers. We made up a monstrous force. Looking at it I felt we could sail into Yokohama Harbor. Started through the Straits at 0900. All hands at battle stations. Had a very uneventful day, didn't see a sign of a Jap. Our planes flew combat air patrol all day. No attacks today. Racked out 2045.

Thursday, Jan. 4, 1945

Up at 0430. Still on battle stations. Passed through the Mindanao Sea unmolested into the Sulu Sea. All hands were beginning to be confident we would not be attacked. At 1700 I was on the gallery deck when the general alarm rang. It was time for the kamikazes again. As I looked across at the Ommaney Bay, a carrier riding on our starboard beam, I saw a Jap plane dive across the flight deck and crashed into the bridge. Meanwhile, other Jap planes were diving on us and other ships in our force. There were many close calls, but all planes were shot down after about 30 minutes of battle. The Ommaney Bay was dead in the water and afire. The aviation gas was ablaze. The word evidently was passed to abandon ship for men were jumping into the water on all sides. Soon explosions were heard as the various ammo rooms caught fire. Two destroyers stood in as close as they dared to take on survivors. We were all wondering if the magazines and torpedoes would explode before the men could swim to safety. Nearly all survivors were picked up when the torpedoes and magazine blew up. The concussion nearly capsized the destroyer on her starboard side. Several men were blown off the decks of the tin can. At last all rescue work was done and we moved off leaving the Ommaney Bay a mass of flames.

One destroyed stayed behind to torpedo the blazing ship. This was a good day for the Japs for we had lost one carrier, with 32 planes and over 100 men. I am another five years older tonight. What has tomorrow in store for us? Racked out exhausted at 2130. The Japs lost 12 planes.

Friday, Jan. 5, 1945

Up at 0430 and back on battle stations. Still in the Sulu Sea, a place I shall never forget. The sinking of the Ommaney Bay left us all with some pretty bad nerves. All went well today until the usual 1700. Again the kamikazes were after us. We counted about 18 this time. The heavies threw up an anti-aircraft barrage. I was on the flight deck rearming a fighter on the after end of the flight deck. The guns were firing at the attacking planes, as I looked up I saw a plane start a dive on a cruiser on our starboard quarter, went on with my work, when our 40 millimeters let loose, which meant something was getting might close. I looked up and saw the plane that had started the run on the cruiser was hit and had changed course and was headed for us, and awfully close. I jumped off the wing of the plane I was on and dropped flat on the flight deck. Our guns pumped lead at the plane, but still it came on toward our fantail, just before she was about to hit, it burst into flames and exploded scattering fire and debris all over the fantail. The fire fighting boys were on the ball and put the fire out, before any damage was done. After this narrow escape we all really had a bad case of nerves. About all I could do was sit and shake. Meanwhile, the Manila Bay, our sister ship, took a glancing hit on the forward end of her flight deck. Luckily she didn't catch fire and was able to get under way again in about 20 minutes. She lost about 60 men. The planes were finally all shot down, I was told later that one of our battle wagons took a suicider on her bridge. It was a might rough day all in all and darkness was a welcome sight. Turned in at 2030, but no sleep tonight, was too upset.

Saturday, Jan. 6, 1945

Up at 0430, at battle stations. Today we entered the South China Sea and started up the coast past Manila to our area of operation off Lingaeyen Gulf. No attacks today until about 1730 when our convoy of troop ships joined up with another convoy of troops. Attacks started again, but this time the Japs were all shot down before they could get close enough to harm us. The troops land at dawn. Racked out at 2200. God be with those troop ships tomorrow, and us.

Sunday, Jan. 7, 1945

Up at 0430 at battle stations. Got an awful shock at dawn upon the discovery that all our battle wagons and cruisers and most of our destroyers were gone. We had six destroyers and six carriers. Not much of a force to fight off kamikazes. The big stuff had gone in to shell the beach while our troops landed. We loaded the planes with bombs and bombed the beach. No attacks. Troops landed without too much resistance. Turned in 2300. Plenty tired.

Monday, Jan. 8, 1945

Up 0430. Still bombing roads, bridges, and troops. No attacks today. Found out our planes and the army maintain constant patrols over Clark Field, Manila, and other Jap air bases and shoot the planes down before they can take off. Am desperately tired again tonight. Turn in after loading first bombing hop for tomorrow. Racked out 2430.

Tuesday, Jan. 9, 1945

Up 0430. Still bombing around Lingayen Gulf. Lost one plane today. Ens. Sargent shot down over Lingayen Gulf. Am getting so tired can hardly drag myself along. Still have days and nights of work ahead. Turned in at 0100.

Wednesday, Jan. 10, 1945

Up 0430. Continued bombing. Today the weather is clear but the sea is getting extremely rough. Got an awful scare today. We were turning in to the wind to pick up our planes, the ship made two awful lists, one of 32°. It seemed most certain she was going to capsize. I and several others were just about ready to go over the side. Two planes tipped over on the flight deck severely injuring two plane captains. All day the ship rolled from side to side. At night we took on sea water in our empty fuel tanks and lessened our danger of side roll. Turned in at 2300.

Thursday, Jan. 11, 1945

Up 0430. Still bombing. The sea is still rough. Was not able to sleep last night for it seemed like every wave we hit was going to tear the ship apart. All hands were plenty worried. It's a miracle that the pilots can land and take off. I'm getting too tired to care whether I live or not anymore.

Friday, Jan. 12, 1945

Up 0430. The sea is as rough as ever. The ship creaks and shudders at every wave. Every once in a while the waves break over the flight deck, which is 50 feet from the water in ordinary times. We are all plenty worried as to whether she will hold together. Still flying and bombing Luzon. Feel like I can't carry on much longer between fatigue and worry. Racked out at 2300.

Saturday, Jan. 13, 1945

Up 0430. Dead on my feet today. I think if I were given my choice between life or death I would take the latter. More worry today. The sea is still pounding at us. The plates on the port side amidships are beginning to crack open. Only consolation - it's above the water line. Went on bombing today. Most trying working conditions. Turned in at 2400. Got very little sleep.

Sunday, Jan. 14, 1945

Up 0430. Sea is still rough, more cracks were reported, this time below the water line. I heard the Captain say today that we would stay here till we broke up, rather than turn back before our mission was completed. More worry. Still fighting and bombing. Turned in 2300. Just cat naps again tonight.

Monday, Jan. 15, 1945

Up at 0430. Oh, this rough weather, will it ever stop? More cracks in the hull forward. Still bombed today. Also, we are now out of bombs. Still we are staying out here. No new cracks today, were pumping out the forward hold 24 hours a day now. Turned in at 2000. Slept in spite of everything tonight.

Tuesday, Jan. 16, 1945

Up 0430. Still rough water and pumping out hold. Our work has lightened since bombs are gone. Giving fighter cover now. We seem to have complete control of the air and sea now. No Jap planes sighted for a week. Turned in at 2000.

Wednesday, Jan. 17, 1945

Up 0430. Still rough, the ship is taking an awful beating, but still holding together. Am not quite as worried about her as I was. Guess she will ride her out OK. I hope. More fighter coverage today. Turned in 1930.

Thursday, Jan. 18, 1945

Still in the China Sea, still rough as ever. We expect to be going back any day now. Things are going good on the beach. Army is about 40 miles inland. Life is looking more inviting every day. Racked up at 2100.

Friday, Jan. 19, 1945

Up 0430. Oh happy days! Got the word we are starting back today. Uneventful day, no Japs. One bad barrier crash, no one injured. Turned in at 2100.

Saturday, Jan. 20, 1945

Up 0430. Oh, but got bad news today. We are going below Manila and pick up bombs and stay out here to go in on another operation. Only place I can figure to pick up bombs is at Mindoro. Turned in at 2000.

Sunday, Jan. 21, 1945

Up 0430. Sea is calm today for the first time. We are passing Bataan and Corregidor. Can see them on our port beam. No air action at all. One would hardly believe we were in sight of the two most heavily fortified spots in the Philippines. Had quite an easy day for a change, no flying. Turned in at 2100.

Monday, Jan. 22, 1945

Up 0430. Pulled into the harbor at Mindoro. Saw Jap tanker burning in harbor. Was told it had been burning for three weeks, ever since invasion day. We were here to pick up bombs. I went on working party to the S. S. Durham, an ammo ship. Worked like a horse from 0900 till 2100, nothing to eat all day. Turned in at 2400. Was turned out at 0230 to load armor piercing bombs. We got a report that three Jap carriers were headed for Mindoro, to expect air attack at dawn. All hands turned to stow the bombs so we could get underway before dawn. No sleep for anyone.

Tuesday, Jan. 23, 1945

Got under way at 0415. And are safely out of harbor by dawn. We got orders to load planes with torpedoes. Got word about noon that Jap carriers had been intercepted by another task force, had turned back and gotten away. The skipper canceled all flights so we could get some rest. Turned in at 2000.

Wednesday, Jan. 24, 1945

Up at 0430. Had light flying schedule today. Part of our force left us to head back. Our ship and five others were left behind in the China Sea. We are killing time waiting for something new. Also trying to decoy the remainder of the Jap fleet out of hiding. Not so good on the nerves, this decoy stuff. Turned in at 2030.

Thursday, Jan. 25, 1945

Up 0430. Still killing time. Found out that we are waiting for a convoy of troops coming into make a landing at Subic Bay, just above Manila. We are just 50 miles off the coast directly opposite Corregidor. No Jap planes bother us, we still have absolute control of the air. Sent a search hop out today looking for the Jap fleet. Turned in at 1930.

Friday, Jan. 26, 1945

Up at 0430. Just a routine day today. Anti-sub patrol, and another search hop for the Jap fleet. Guess they are well hidden for we had no sign of them. Tomorrow the troops land in Subic Bay. Turned in at 2000.

Saturday, Jan. 27, 1945

Up 0430. Landed the troops successfully at dawn. Gave them air cover. We lost one fighter plane today, shot down by anti aircraft over Bataan. Worked awfully hard again today. Loaded tomorrow's hop. Turned in at 2300.

Sunday, Jan. 28, 1945

Up 0430. Still giving air support to troops. Got a report from the army that a Jap destroyer, maybe two, were trying to escape from Manila Bay. We sent planes over and sunk them. Another tough day for us loading bombs. We are supposed to start back tonight. Turned in at 2100.

Monday, Jan. 29, 1945

Up 0430. Got bad news, we did not go back, seems the army got a set back, so we stay to give them more air support today. We get started back tonight, if all goes well today. Turned in at 2300.

Tuesday, Jan. 30, 1945

Up 0430. Hallelujah! We are heading for safe waters again. We entered the Sulu Sea this morning. All is quiet here now. Seems the kamikazes have finally been wiped out in that area. Got a report and contact on a Jap sub tonight five miles off our port beam. Can see destroyers dropping depth charges on it. Turned in at 2100.

Wednesday, Jan. 31, 1945

Up 0430. Got the word this a.m. that the U.S.S. Monroe commanded by one of Roosevelt's sons, had sunk the Jap sub last night. Flew anti sub patrol today. Turned in at 1900.

Thursday, Feb. 1, 1945

Up 0430. Uneventful day. We are getting much needed rest. Are passing through Surigao Straits. No Japs bothering us. Turned in at 2000.

Friday, Feb. 2, 1945

Up 0430. Are in Leyte Gulf this morning heading for Ulithi. Scuttlebutt is that we may be going back to the States, which I doubt. Pilots flew to Leyte and brought four new planes aboard. Flew anti-sub today. Had a bad barrier crash wrecking two planes. Turned in at 2000.

Saturday, Feb. 3, 1945

Up 0430. Uneventful day. No flying. Getting some much needed rest. Turned in 2000.

Sunday, Feb. 4, 1945

Up 0430. Still at sea one day out from Ulithi. No flying today. Get into Ulithi about 0900 tomorrow. Turned in at 2000.

Monday, Feb. 5, 1945

Up 0430. Arrived at Ulithi 0900. Part of Halsey's fleet is in this port. Guess we will be here about six days. The scuttlebutt is flowing freely as to what's up. We will probably get some good food for a change. Food has been bad for past two weeks, all dehydrated stuff. Movies tonight. Turned in at 2200.

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 1945

Up 0630. Started taking up supplies today. Lots of work for all hands. Got some mail, first in a long time. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Wednesday, Feb. 7, 1945

Up 0630. Today we take on more bombs. A back breaking job. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Thursday, Feb. 8, 1945

Up 0630. Still taking on supplies. The Admiral Stump and his staff left us today. We are getting a new admiral aboard. Hope he is as good as Stump was. Movies. Tattoo 2200.

Friday, Feb. 9, 1945

Up 0630. Sort of looks now like another operation is ahead for us, Lord knows where. Still getting supplies aboard. Movies. Turned in at 2200. Wakened at 2400, more bombs coming aboard, we are leaving at noon tomorrow, and not for the states.

Saturday, Feb. 10, 1945

Up all night. The Captain commended all hands this morning on their past performances under fire, also gave us the word on where we are going. The sad news is we are going to land Marines on Iwo Jima, 450 miles from Tokyo. A might hot spot right now. Hope our luck still holds. Cleared harbor at 2330. Got lots of back mail today. Took on six new airplanes this p.m. Turned in at 2100.

Sunday, Feb. 11, 1945

Up 0430. Still underway. We passed Guam this evening. Flew anti-sub patrol. We are going to stop a few hours at Saipan in a couple of days.

Monday, Feb. 12, 1945

We went through the whole operation today of our landing the Marines on Iwo Jima. We will go up to Iwo three days before the landing takes place and try and get control of the air around that territory. I hope it's not as tough to do as we expect it to be. Got lots of back mail today. I got 48 letters. Flew anti-sub patrol today. Turned in at 2130.

Tuesday, Feb. 13, 1945

Up 0430. Dropped anchor in Saipan at 0730. Much to our horror we had a lighter loaded with bombs and rockets waiting for us. So worked like a horse loading. Were told to clear the harbor as quick as possible, for word was received that an air raid was expected. Got word we were going on to cover the landing on Iwo Jima. We arrived two days before the troops, so we can bomb the beach and soften them up for the Marines to land. There are nine CVE's and about 12 destroyers in our force. Rather a small force, but Halsey's big stuff will be operating between Iwo and Japan proper, so we are all hoping for the best. Turned in at 2130.

Wednesday, Feb. 14, 1945

Up at 0430. Flew anti-sub patrol today. We are about 400 miles from Iwo. Will start bombing the 16th and the Marines will land on the 19th. I'm afraid this will be another bloody battle like Tarawa was. We know the island is heavily entrenched with anti-aircraft batteries. They should not have too many planes there, but we are in bomber range from Japan. Turned in 2300.

Thursday, Feb. 15, 1945

Up 0430. Well, today the Japs have been flying around us, but none have come in to attack; guess they are looking us over, for our reception tomorrow or next day. Tonight the ocean is as still as glass, has been all day; the phosphorus glow is terrific tonight. If there are any bombers around tonight they can spot us miles off, for the wake of our ships shows up for miles. The nervous strain today has really been tough. Turned in at 2130.

Friday, Feb. 16, 1945

Up 0430. Was a stormy and foggy day today. We had several Jap planes flying all around us again today, but no attacks. Flew several anti-sub patrols today and fighters strafed Iwo Jima today. We lost one plane in the fog, no trace of the pilot was found. Had one barrier crash but no damage was done. We got the good news on the bull horn today that the Sixth Fleet was attacking Tokyo today. Heard Tokyo Rose, Japan's foremost propagandist admitted tonight that there were about 1000 American planes over Tokyo. Tonight we are on the alert for P.T. boats, that is our latest worry. Tomorrow we start bombing Iwo in earnest. Expect the Jap air corps will visit us for sure tomorrow. Turned in at 2330.

Saturday, Feb. 17, 1945

Up 0305 alarm sounded to man all battle stations - the Japs were on their way. I can't begin to put down today's events entirely. We beat them off and went about our scheduled bombing of Iwo. We're in sight of the island all day, which was a mass of smoke from our bombing raids. We lost one torpedo plane today, and had three badly shot up. Also dropped napalm bombs. I don't see how any Japs can be alive on the little two by four island after the drubbing they took today, but they are still firing on our planes from the ground. Tomorrow the troops are landing one day ahead of schedule. I hope God is with them and us tomorrow. The strain has been terrific today. Am dead tired tonight again. Turned in at 2200.

Sunday, Feb. 18, 1945

Up 0230. We attacked by submarine. It launched three fish at us but missed us. We are getting the air under control. Things eased off today. We flew anti-sub and bombed the island. We are still in sight of Iwo which is a mass of flames and smoke. The troops did not land today but go in tomorrow as scheduled. There should not be too much resistance left, can't tell for sure though. Tokyo Rose broadcasted today that the Natoma Bay was sunk by the Kamikazes. This is the third time she has said that on the radio. If she is right this is a ghost ship, but she is sure letting the Japs she comes in contact with know she's here. Am dead tired and a nervous wreck

as is all the crew tonight. Turned in at 2130.

Monday, Feb. 19, 1945

Up 0430. Today the Marines landed on Iwo at 0900. I'm sorry to say from the reports that the casualties are high in spite of our pounding the island so hard. The air was cleared of all Jap planes and we now have complete control of the air. This water is lousy with Jap submarines and we are going to stay here for a few days of anti-sub work. The Sixth Fleet stopped by from its way back from Tokyo's raid to help us pound Iwo. The battleships shelled the island and we had hundreds of planes in the air bombing. The Japs are so strongly entrenched it is hard to bomb them out. Of course, this is one of the Japs heaviest fortified islands in the Pacific, second to Formosa in strength. The Marines only advanced 350 yards in establishing a beach head. Rugged going. Turned in at 2200.

Tuesday, Feb. 20, 1945

Up 0430. We still have complete control of the air in this area, but received the word that the troops are having rugged going. We flew anti-sub patrol and combat air patrol today. Tomorrow we are going to have to start bombing again, thought we were through, but have to start again. We are in bad shape for torpedo planes. All have been badly shot up the last three days, but the mechs have been working night and day on them and have eight of the twelve back into flying shape. Tokyo Rose said today that we were losing the battle for Iwo Jima, but from where I sit I think we are winning, just slowed down for a short while. Could sure use a rest. I'm so tired today it would seem to be better to be dead. Turned in 2300.

Wednesday, Feb. 21, 1945

Up 0430. We pounded the island of Iwo again today. The Japs finally send out planes. They did not get out to us however. Our planes and several other carriers' planes fought them over Iwo Jima. We are 35 miles from the island today and could see the dogfights. The U.S.S. Saratoga took a kamikaze today, damage unknown as yet. We are leaving this area tomorrow to rendezvous with a tanker about 250 miles south of here, but will be back day after tomorrow. The weather is cold and rainy here most of the time. I sure like the cold part. Turned in at 2200.

Thursday, Feb. 22, 1945

Up 0430. Today we retired to fuel 200 miles from Iwo Jima. Flew anti-sub patrol. Took on fuel all afternoon. Got word on the loudspeaker from the Captain that half of our force left behind to carry on was under air attack and the Bismarck Sea, a baby carrier of our force, was sunk, another was hit and under tow. We are to go back tomorrow and relived them so they can come and fuel, so to be prepared for a hard battle. The Saratoga has gone back to Pearl for repairs.

Friday, Feb. 23, 1945

Up 0430. All went pretty good today. Our torpedo planes are all in bad shape and it is quite a struggle for the mechs to keep them flying, they have been so badly shot up. We flew local anti-sub most of the day, also made one bombing run on the island. Just as twilight faded the Japs entered our screen, we know that there was about 25 planes. At night our chances aren't so good. Was at G.Q. for four hours, we could hear them all around us and plenty close. Several ships fired at them, but our guns kept silent. It has really sapped our nerves. Guess we can expect it all the time now that the Sixth Fleet left the Tokyo area. Our planes are badly short, but I think we still have the advantage for God is on our side. He was tonight or this probably would have been the last page. Turned in 2300. Still on alert for return of Japs.

Saturday, Feb. 24, 1945

[Bob Winne's 31st birthday] Up 0430. Continued bombing today. We had the pleasure of seeing Old Glory Flying from the peak of Mt. Suribachi today. The Marines have about half the island captured today, but the worse is yet to be taken. The casualties are well over 5,000, far ahead of Tarawa. Just secured from battle stations, no Japs so far tonight. Turned in 2000. Was awakened at 2100 by general alarm, the Japs came after all. The moon is as bright as could be, not a cloud in the sky. One group of torpedo planes came in on the starboard beam flying low, just before getting in good torpedo range, for some unknown reason turned away and left. God is sill with us, for if they had dropped fish we would have been goners. A bunch of planes were all around us for a couple of hours, but none attacked, guess they were just trying to keep us from getting rest. Secured from G.Q. at 2400, not much sleep again tonight. Seems like another ten years have been added to my age tonight.

Sunday, Feb. 25, 1945

Up at 0430, today we retired about 200 miles south of the island of Iwo to take on some more fuel and get some new planes. Took on three torpedo planes and one fighter. Much to our distress we found our tanker torpedoed and in flames. I don't know what is up now. We have fuel enough for two days flying and enough for about a week for the ship. Had a light flying scheduled today and got some much needed rest after a very uncomfortable night. We are now headed back to Iwo Jima. Turned in at 2000.

Monday, Feb. 26, 1945

Up 0430. Turned back to refuel from another tanker. No flying today, got some more much needed rest. Had submarine trouble again tonight but it was sunk by one of our destroyer escorts. No Jap planes today. Turned in at 2000.

Tuesday, Feb. 27, 1945

Up at 0430. Are back bombing Iwo today. Our bomb supply is just about exhausted. No Jap planes today, but subs have been giving us a bad time today. Our destroyer escorts have been busy dropping depth charges all afternoon. Tomorrow we will send out the last of our bombs. Hope this means we will go back to port. Scuttlebutt is that we will rearm at sea, which wouldn't surprise me. Turned in at 2300.

Wednesday, Feb. 28, 1945

Up at 0330. Bombing again today. Have used all our bombs. Tomorrow we are getting a new supply of rockets aboard. No Japs have bothered us so far today. Got the bad news via the scuttlebutt that will probably be going right from here, after rearming the ship, to strike in the Ryukyu Islands somewhere. I hope it's not true for we will have to be plenty lucky to come through that on this worn out tug. The forward elevations have been given lots of trouble the past two days. The ship is still leaking from the pounding we took in the China sea. Welders are over the side every day trying to weld it back together. Guess they will just keep us going till the Japs or the elements get us.

Thursday, Mar. 1, 1945

Up 0430. Flew anti-sub patrol today. Also took on a new captain. Had Quarters for muster and Captain Morehouse relinquished his command to Captain Nickles. Our old skipper gave a farewell speech. Told us how proud he was of our combat records and said goodbye. We fueled a destroyer. The Jap air force seems to have given up this area. No Jap subs or planes today. Turned in at 2300.

Friday, Mar. 2, 1945

Up at 0430. Took on more fuel from tanker today, but stayed in sight of the island. The Marines have just about cleaned out the Japs on Iwo, and we expect to leave here in two or three days for Guam to stock up and prepare for our next strike at the enemy. Flew anti-sub patrol today. Turned in at 2100.

Saturday, Mar. 3, 1945

Up at 0430. Today was quite a day. Got the report four Jap transports were pulling a sneak into Iwo with reinforcements. We load torpedoes in the torpedo planes and rockets on the fighters, sent the fighters out to sink them. One fighter was shot out of the sky. Ens. Huston was the pilot, lost with no hopes of rescue. Canceled the torpedo hop for the Enterprise's planes made the kill and sunk all four. Flew anti-sub patrol in the afternoon. Secured at 2000. At 2100 general alarm sounded to man all battle stations. Jap planes were flying over head. We could hear the engines and see the silhouettes. None attacked however, just sleep killers. Turned in at 2300.

Sunday, Mar. 4, 1945

Up 0430. Flew anti-sub and combat air patrol today. Ens. Gray shot down a Francis (Jap bomber). We lost one fighter. It went over the side when taking off, pilot was saved. No Jap planes or subs today around our task force. The Marines have control of all but one end of the island. The army moved in with a squadron of P-47's. We should be leaving here any day now. Turned in at 2100.

Monday, Mar. 5, 1945

Up at 0430. Flew anti-sub today, also got more rockets aboard from a D. E. Uneventful day, but lots of work. Turned in at 2100.

Tuesday, Mar. 6, 1945

Up at 0210. Was routed out by general alarm this morning. Seems they intercepted a Jap message that we were to be attacked by torpedo planes. All we lost on that was lost of sleep, no planes showed up. Flew anti-sub patrol. We expect to be leaving here tomorrow night for Guam or Ulithi. The Marines have just about gotten the Japs wiped out, although there is still heavy fighting on north end of island. The Marine casualties to date are 2010. The bloodiest battle in the history of the Marine Corps. They sure deserve lots of credit. Turned in at 2100.

Wednesday, Mar. 7, 1945

Up at 0430. No Japs today, but we got word this morning that the Japs sunk the Bunker Hill aircraft carrier, and hit some other ships of Mischer's force, near Tokyo. We still don't know if we are leaving tonight. Turned in at 0430. [This may be a mistake.]

Thursday, Mar. 8, 1945

Up at 0430. We have left Iwo Jima with our mission completed. Are heading for Ulithi again to rearm and take on supplies. Don't know what the operation will be, but most likely Okinawa. Some of the boys still claim we are going back to the states, but I'm not of the same belief. Flew anti-sub today. Turned in at 2000.

Friday, Mar. 9, 1945

Up at 0430. No flying today, figured they might let us get a little rest, but no, we had to spend the day stacking ammo and belting it, some chipped paint. We are all so dead tired we can hardly move, but no rest in sight. We are supposed to hit Ulithi Sunday morning and if all goes true to form we will have an ammo ship waiting to rearm us. No rest while in port. We had an extra special treat tonight. A movie, the first we have ever had while underway at sea. Turned in at 2130.

Saturday, Mar. 10, 1945

Up at 0430. Are passing Guam and Saipan today. They flew all new torpedo planes aboard today. We are losing our squadron at Ulithi, they are going back to the states, lucky dogs. We pick up a new squadron for our next operation, which I'm sure will be Okinawa. We pull into Ulithi in the morning. We are having movies again tonight. Turned in at 2200.

Sunday, Mar. 11, 1945

Up at 0430. No flying today. Pulled into Ulithi at 1400. Lots of first line carriers here. Was in the movies about 2000 enjoying the picture, One Dangerous Night, when we heard the roar of a plane engine and a terrific explosion. A pair of Jap Kamikaze planes had sneaked in on us and dived into the U.S.S. Randolph. She was anchored about 200 yards on our port beam. She was all ablaze back aft. We manned all battle stations for about two hours, nothing more showed up. The fire on the carrier was quickly put out, not too much damage was done. We are supposed to be in a comparatively safe harbor, but the Japs pulled a fast one on us alright. The planes must have come from Yap. Turned in at 2400.

Monday, Mar. 12, 1945

Up at 0630. Had a busy day working on our new planes. Japs came in at noon with reconnaissance planes, battle stations were manned for about an hour. No attacks though. At six o'clock a large load of rockets came along side, so we turned to bringing them aboard - an all night job. At 2100 the Japs came in again and we left our work to man battle stations for about one hour. Nothing attacked us though so we went back to work. Turned in at 0400.

Tuesday, Mar. 13, 1945

Up at 0700. General alarm rang, more Jap planes looking us over I guess. No attacks in the harbor. Went back to work moving ammo out of the hold. Secured that at 1800. Out of the past 32 hours have worked like a horse for 29 hours. Am dead tired.

Wednesday, Mar. 14, 1945

Up at 0630, turned to till 0930 and then went on recreation party to the island of Mog Mog. Had three cans of beer and went swimming. A pretty island. Returned to ship at 1800 and had to turn to all night loading ammo and bombs. Turned in at 0500.

Thursday, Mar. 15, 1945

Up at 0830. Got new squadron aboard VC-9. Regular port routine today. Worked all day moving ammo. Movies. Turned in at 1930.

Friday, Mar. 16, 1945

Up at 0630. Had easy day today. Our forward engine is out of commission. The scuttlebutt has it that we are going back to the states but I figure it's bum dope. It looks like Japan itself will be our next invasion strike and I think that is where we will go. Regular port routine today, worked on my new plane getting it in shape for battle. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Saturday, Mar. 17, 1945

Up at 0630. Regular port routine. Lots of work. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Sunday, Mar. 18, 1945

Up at 0300. Took on more bombs and rockets. Regular port routine. Were called to battle stations at noon, Japs reported from radar coming in for attack. All were shot down by the island based planes before getting here. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Monday, Mar. 19, 1945

Up at 0630. Regular port routine. We are leaving Wednesday morning at 0600. Destination unknown to us as yet. I guess it's Okinawa 250 miles from Tokyo. I know we will be out about two months. Guess it's all up to God again. Movies. Turned in at 2040.

Tuesday, Mar. 20, 1945

Up at 0630. Regular port routine. Secured all spaces for sea, we are leaving at 0600 in the morning. Were called to battle stations at 1100, but all Jap planes were shot down before getting to the harbor. Movies. Turned in at 2300.

Wednesday, Mar. 21, 1945

Up at 0400. Got underway at 0600. No flying today. They have not given out our destination yet, but I think Okinawa. Turned in at 2100.

Thursday, Mar. 22, 1945

Up at 0430. No flying today. Had a very easy day. The captain gave us the word today. We are landing troops on Okinawa, 250 miles south of Japan proper. I hope God is still with us. Turned in at 2100.

Friday, Mar. 23, 1945

Up at 0430. Two anti-sub hops today. Uneventful day. Turned in at 2300.

Saturday, Mar. 24, 1945

Up at 0430. Were dogged by Jap subs all night. They are looking us over. Tomorrow we will be in the target area, will probably catch hell there. We are starting to enter the target area. Subs are still dogging us. A plane from another ship crashed into our main mast tonight and knocked out part of our surface radar gear. We had three crashes on deck today landing planes. This squadron is pretty poor. I sure wish we had VC 81 back. Turned in at 2400.

Sunday, Mar. 25, 1945

Up at 0430. Started bombing Okinawa, things are going good, was called to battle stations at 1710, planes turned out to be friendly, thank God. Was recalled to battle stations at 1900, the task force was under bomber attack. All planes were shot down, none came too close to us, but it's a very uncomfortable feeling just the same. Turned in at 2300.

Monday, Mar. 26, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing today. Was called to battle stations at 0730, four planes were attacking, but all were shot down. The air seemed to be swept clean this afternoon. We continued bombing Okinawa. Were called to battle stations again at about 1830, just after all planes were landed, they most always come in on us as soon as we finish landing the planes. None came in too close tonight. They were attacking the other half of our force about five miles off our port beam. The U.S.S. Bataan was hit but not sunk. All Jap planes were shot down, about six total.

Tuesday, Mar. 27, 1945

Called to battle stations at 0320 this morning. The Japs were flying all around us, just sleep robbers I guess for they did not come in to attack. We continued bombing again today. We lost one torpedo plane today, it was shot down over Okinawa. We were called to battle stations three times in all today. Sure am worn out tonight between work and nervous strain. Turned in at 2200.

Wednesday, Mar. 28, 1945

Up at 0030. General alarm sounded. Were up at 1½ hours while Jap planes circled over head, no attacks, just sleep robbers. Up again at 0315, another alarm, more Japs, still no attacks, more sleep and nerves lost. Stayed up rest of night. Bombed Okinawa all day. Had two attacks during the day, no harm done. Plenty worn out tonight. Turned in at 2300.

Thursday, Mar. 29, 1945

Up at 0430. No alarms last night or today; we have everything our own way, continued bombing today. Opposition is considerably lighter than we expected, as close as we are to Japan. Turned in at 2400.

Friday, Mar. 30, 1945

Up at 0430. No alarms last night. Continued bombing, things are going swell for us, the troops land day after tomorrow. We are hoping things going well for them when they go in. Things are almost too quiet now, the Japs must be holding back for D-day. Turned in at 2300.

Saturday, Mar. 31, 1945

Up at 0430. Bombed all day today, no Jap air interference whatsoever. Looks sort of fishy, too quiet. The troops land in the morning. Hundreds of troop ships are with us tonight waiting zero hour. We had a sub attack just at sundown, no harm done and it was sunk. We are out of bombs and are going in to an island named Kremia [Kerama], which was taken just three days ago and still full of Japs. Seems like taking an awful chance but I guess they know what they are doing, I hope. Turned in at 2000.

Easter Sunday, Apr. 1, 1945

Up at 0430. Pulled into Kerama Retto at 0910 to pick up bombs and rockets. We are just 15 miles from where the troops are landing on Okinawa. We can hear to [their?] guns and see the flashes. At 1845 were called to battle stations. The Japs attack, we pulled anchor and got underway. Eight Jap planes hit, but we sneaked out under cover of darkness. Were in a bad spot with the hanger decks full of bombs. Luck and God were with us again and we got away unharmed. To tell the truth, we are all so tired that we are all just about ready to hope the Japs do hit us so those that are left have a chance to go back home on survivors leave. Can't age any more, feel so old now that I'm ready for the old sailors's home. Worked all night stowing bombs. Turned in at 0300.

Monday, Apr. 2, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing today. The troops are doing fine since they landed yesterday morning. I understand they have captured two airfield. Were called to battle stations at 1900 tonight. Jap planes within a few miles of us, but none came in close. Am dog tired tonight. Turned in at 2200.

Tuesday, Apr. 3, 1945

Up at 0130. We had a submarine attack, one fish was launched at us. We managed to dodge it by backing down fast. Got is still with us. Not much sleep again. The squadron flew anti-sub patrol all day today, no bombing. The army is really going to town on Okinawa, don't need the air support we expected. We are expecting heavy air attacks soon, but the past couple of days the Jap air force hasn't bothered us too much. We had two crack ups on deck today. One plane is a loss to us, the other is being repaired.

Wednesday, Apr. 4, 1945

Up at 0430. Flew anti-sub all day today. Had a call to battle stations at 1730, but much to our relief it turned out to be one of our own planes with the I77 not working. Turned in at 2300.

Thursday, Apr. 5, 1945

Up at 0430. Anti-sub patrol again today, very uneventful and routine day. Got a little rest for a change. Turned in at 2100.

Friday, Apr. 6, 1945

Up at 0430. Thought things were going too smooth for comfort. Today the Japs filled this area with planes. Must have been close to 1000 planes over the island and our task forces. They were shot down by the hundreds. We went to battle stations at 1600 and were under attack until 2100. None got in close enough to do any damage, but we spent a might uncomfortable five or six hours. Turned in at 2300.

Saturday, Apr. 7, 1945

Up at 0430. We expected heavy aerial attacks today, but no planes showed up. Had other troubles though. This area was lousy with floating mines, kept the destroyers busy blowing them up. Got word tonight the Jap fleet is coming out to meet us again, so Lord knows what tomorrow brings. We fueled today in spite of everything. Turned in at 2300.

Sunday, Apr. 8, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing the island today. The Jap force that was heading this way was intercepted a few miles north of us and destroyed one battleship, two cruisers, and a number of destroyers. We got word that more of the remaining Jap fleet will be down this way soon, but we are ready and waiting for them. Turned in at 2400.

Monday, Apr. 9, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing Okinawa. Very uneventful day. We were to go in to Kerama Retto tomorrow to rearm, but heavy air attacks are expected so it has been canceled. Are we glad for quite a few ships have been sunk there. We go in the 12th instead. Turned in at 2300.

Tuesday, Apr. 10, 1945

Up at 0200. Were called to load bombs for an early morning hop. We discontinued flying at 0930 for it seems the army and marines didn't need support today. A new batch of marines landed today on southern Okinawa and things are going good. Storms have settled in on us today, and the air attacks did not materialize, thank God.

Wednesday, Apr. 11, 1945

Up at 0300, general alarm was sounded, and the sky was full of Jap planes, none came in very close. They were flying over us attacking the island. We were on our way in the rearm but were called back to our task force as heavy raids were expected on Kerama Retto. Continued bombing the island instead. Turned in at 2300.

Thursday, Apr. 12, 1945

Up at 0430. The reports were true and Kerama Retto was under heavy attack all afternoon. We were at battle stations most of the afternoon, nothing got too close until just after sundown and then we were attacked by three low flying torpedo planes. Two were shot down and the other got away, only one torpedo as launched and that missed us by quite a wide margin. It's been a hard day on us all today. Turned in at 2200.

Friday, Apr. 13, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing today, no Jap planes. We are going in again tomorrow to rearm. We are all plenty nervous about the whole deal. We expect plenty of attacks tomorrow. Turned in at 2200.

Saturday, Apr. 14, 1945

Up at 0430. Dropped anchor about 0830 to rearm. Were anchored about 15 minutes when the alarm rang. Were under attack, but no planes go in close or did any damage. We took on the biggest load of bombs we ever took on. All hands turned to and worked like the devil. We got underway and were under attack by three torpedo planes. It was dark and as before the lucky Natoma got out again. One of the planes hit the water near us, and other two past, so turned back to attack the island. Has been a nerve racking day what I mean. Also got word of F.D.R.'s death yesterday. Turned in at 2400.

Sunday, Apr. 15, 1945

Up at 0200. Was called to load bombs, what a job to get up and to get the men up and get started. Continued bombing today. No sign of any Jap planes today. We are all dead tired again tonight. We have a ray of hope for some rest soon, the forward engine broke down and we are running on the after engine only. It's a cinch we can't stay out much longer. Turned in at 2300.

Monday, Apr. 16, 1945

Up at 0430. Still limping along on one engine, which is in bad shape. They took 7 torpedo planes and two fighters off today, and we got word we are going back to Guam for repairs; it's even possible we'll get back to Pearl or the states. We are all praying for the latter. No Japs have bothered us at all today. The U.S.S. Shanango [Chenango] was hit today. She is with Task Force 58 just north of us, about 100 miles, no word as to whether she was sunk or not. Our work is slacked off considerable tonight, for with the torpedo planes gone, we have no bombs to load tonight. We have 4 left to fly anti-sub patrol with on our way to Guam. Turned in at 2000.

Tuesday, Apr. 17, 1945

Up at 0430. Today we got the news official that we are bound for Guam. We are to be there for ten days to get our engines repaired and then get back to Okinawa. It will give us a chance to rest up some. Flew anti-sub patrol today. We had movies too; unusual to have movies under way. Turned in at 2200.

Wednesday, Apr. 18, 1945

Up at 0430. Uneventful day, getting some much needed rest. Sure are alone out here with our one little destroyer escort. Had movies again tonight. Turned in at 2200.

Thursday, Apr. 19, 1945

Up at 0430. Still en route to Guam with only one engine. Are taking life easy, very little flying. Movies again tonight. Turned in at 2200.

Friday, Apr. 20, 1945

Up at 0430. Arrived in Guam at 1600 today. It is a beautiful island but hotter than Hades. Movies. Turned in at 2300.

Saturday, Apr. 21, 1945

Up at 0630. Got word we were to go in dry dock the 25th much to our sorrow. That means another six or eight months out here. My division officer told me there is an opening for a first class to go to turret school in Jax, Fla. He said if he got a replacement for me I could go. Am not banking on it at all, just hoping. Got word this evening that the Enterprise is badly hit and under tow for this port, which fouls up our dry dock schedule if she makes it. We are expecting a typhoon, which makes it hard to tell if she will make it or not. So we don't know where we stand now. Might make temporary repairs and go back to Okinawa, or go on to the states, probably the former (I'm afraid). Movies tonight. Turned in at 2300.

Sunday, Apr. 22, 1945

Up at 0630. Went ashore today on a recreation party. Had the customary two cans of beer and that was all. Tonight we are preparing to go out to sea again on our one engine. We have order to clear port to ride out the typhoon we are expecting. The planes are being tied down with steel cables, and all other loose gear. We are expecting a mighty bad time of it. We got word that it is about six hundred miles away headed for Guam. No movies tonight. Turned in at 2200.

Monday, Apr. 23, 1945

Up at 0630. Plans to pull out were changed today, seems the typhoon went around us. Rested today, went on a recreation party today. Had two cans of beer. Movies. Turned in at 2300.

Tuesday, Apr. 24, 1945

Up at 0630. Uneventful day. Worked in our spaces painting. Turned in at 2200.

Wednesday, Apr. 25, 1945

Up at 0630. Continued painting and cleaning up spaces. Movies. Turned in 2200.

Thursday, Apr. 26, 1945

Up at 0630. More cleaning of spaces. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Friday, Apr. 27, 1945

Up at 0630. Cleaned spaces. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Saturday, Apr. 28, 1945

Up at 0630. Continued on spaces. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Sunday, Apr. 29, 1945

Up at 0630. Rope yarn Sunday - no work. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Monday, Apr. 30, 1945

Up at 0630. Back to painting spaces. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Tuesday, May 1, 1945

Up at 0630. Got 8 new torpedo planes aboard. I think we are going back to Okinawa about the 5th. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Wednesday, May 2, 1945

Up at 0630. Continued painting spaces. Movies. Turned in at 2200.

Thursday, May 3, 1945

Up at 0630. Got word today that we are shoving off in the morning. Got 8 new torpedo planes and ten new fighters. The ship has been repainted as far as the water line and looks lots better than when we pulled in. Movies. Turned in 2200.

Friday, May 4, 1945

Up at 0630. Shoved off at 0900. Spent the day getting the planes ready for action. Ships gunner had gunnery practice today. Don't know our destination, but expect we are going back to Okinawa again. Turned in at 2300.

Saturday, May 5, 1945

Up at 0430. Got word we are bound for Okinawa to finish up our operation there. Uneventful day. Flew anti-sub patrol. Turned in at 2200.

Sunday, May 6, 1945

Up at 0430. Launched several fighters and torpedo planes today to give our gunner practice in dry sighting. Was a busy afternoon. Turned in at 2300.

Monday, May 7, 1945

Up at 0430. Flew anti-sub patrol. Had a drill in torpedo loading this a.m. We arrive at Okinawa in the morning where we rejoined our task force at five a.m. Turned in at 2300.

Tuesday, May 8, 1945

Up at 0430. Joined our force of 9 carriers and 12 cans at 0500 a.m. We are in the midst of an awful storm. No flying for the visibility is zero. Had a day of complete rest. We are expecting heavier winds tonight. Turned in at 2000.

Wednesday, May 9, 1945

Up at 0430. Got the glad news today that Germany surrendered yesterday. Makes us all happy but we know it won't affect the war over here for quite sometime. Flew anti-sub patrol. The air seems to be under control here now, but have to be on our toes all the time for large raids from Japan. Turned in at 2300.

Thursday, May 10, 1945

Up at 0430. Flew anti-sub patrol. Have been on the alert all afternoon. We were informed that the Japs were going to launch a big air attack today. Nothing showed up however, Turned in at 2200.

Friday, May 11, 1945

Up at 0430. Had a terrific air battle over Okinawa today which our planes took part in. No Jap planes got through to our ships although lots of them were visible to us. Over 118 Jap planes were shot down. We lost five planes, but all pilots saved. One plane of ours went into the water on take-off. Pilot saved. Turned in at 2300. Just got the report one of our destroyers was sunk and one damaged.

Saturday, May 12, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing the city of Naha today. We have run into another Jap mine field today and it keeps our cans busy exploding them. No Jap planes in the day time, but lots around us at night, not attacking but just pestering us. Turned in at 2330.

Sunday, May 13, 1945

Up at 0430. More bombing today. Still quite a few mines. We made a sub contact at sunset near the ship, but it fired no fish at us. Turned in at 2300.

Monday, May 14, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing today. We're in another Jap mine field today. No Jap planes in the day time but lots of planes around us at night, don't bother us much though. Was up all night loading smoke tanks. No sleep at all tonight.

Tuesday, May 15, 1945

Continued bombing. Had a sleet storm this morning. No particular excitement today. Turned in at 2200.

Wednesday, May 16, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing. No Jap aircraft bothering us except at night. Turned in at 2300.

Thursday, May 17, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing. Nothing out of routine today. Turned in at 2300.

Friday, May 18, 1945

Up at 0430. Today our catapult broke down so we could do no bombing, being unable to launch any torpedo planes. We got word today that we are going into suicide harbor (Kerama Retto) to get the catapult fixed and rearm, guess we'll be there a couple of days. Hope God is still with us, for that harbor is under attack quite often. Turned in at 2300.

Saturday, May 19, 1945

Up at 0300. Called to battle stations. Jap planes over head. Did not attack, however. They must have missed us in the darkness. Dropped anchor at 0700. Worked like the devil bringing on bombs. Raised anchor at 1600. We were ordered out of the harbor and were not allowed to stay two days as expected. Too hot a spot for a carrier. Turned in at 2300.

Sunday, May 20, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing today. No Jap planes at all. Turned in at 2200.

Monday, May 21, 1945

Up at 0430. Still bombing Okinawa. Things are going well on the beach, we hope to be getting out of there soon. We have the air completely under control in the day time, but every night the Japs take over, but do no damage or much attacking. About all I can see is that they just fly and pester us. They do drop mines around, so it keeps our D.E. busy exploding them. No ship has hit one of them as yet. Turned in at 2400.

Tuesday, May 22, 1945

Up at 0430. Had a bad storm today, no flying. Two Jap subs came in to attack us this p.m. but were discovered before they could launch any fish. Our destroyer escorts went after them and sunk one. The other got away. Turned in at 2300.

Wednesday, May 23, 1945

Up at 0430. Still stormy today but we got two flights off. About 1300 we were called to battle stations. A Jap plane came in close, but missed us in the fog. Turned in at 2200.

Thursday, May 24, 1945

Up at 0230. Continued bombing today. Was called to battle stations once, but the plane lost us in the fog. We only launched 2 hops because of bad weather. Turned in at 2330.

Friday, May 25, 1945

Up at 0300. More bad weather. Another Jap sub came in to attack this a.m. But was driven off before being able to launch fish. Was called to battle stations three times this p.m. They don't come in for a direct attack, but they sure pester hell out of us. Tonight we withdraw a couple of hundred miles east to refuel. Turned in at 2100.

Saturday, May 26, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued stormy weather today. No flying. More submarine trouble, but no damage done. It's possible that our D.E. sunk one. Turned in at 2300.

Sunday, May 27, 1945

Up at 0430. Japs plenty active in this area today, both subs and planes. They hit several small craft in the harbor of Kerama Retto. Our force sustained no damage.

Monday, May 28, 1945

Up at 0335. Called to battle stations. Jap planes flying in close right over head. None got in close enough for us to fire on. Still bad weather, not much flying. We are to go in to Kerama Retto tomorrow night to take on a new admiral again and rearm. Hope God is still with us. Turned in at 2200.

Tuesday, May 29, 1945

Up at 0400. Continued some bombing, but most of our hops are being canceled because they are fighting so close now that we can't bomb any more. Left the formation tonight for Kerama Retto. Turned in at 2230.

Wednesday, May 30, 1945

Up at 0430. Dropped the hook at 0800. Took on bombs and food supplies. Maybe we will get some better food now. It's been pretty bad. No calls to battle stations today. Got orders to move out at 1600 as they expected heavy air attacks. Turned in at 2200.

Thursday, May 31, 1945

Up at 0200. Had to get up early to get out first hop loaded, then it was canceled. We had one hop for the day. No Japs. Turned in at 2300.

Friday, June 1, 1945

Up at 0430. Two bombing hops today. Still no Japs. We have complete control of the air. Turned in at 2300.

Saturday, June 2, 1945

Up at 0430. No bombing today. Fighting is so close we can't use bombs. Still no Japs. [Then who are they fighting?] Turned in at 2400.

[Also listed as Saturday, June 2, 1945]

Up at 0400. We flew anti-sub patrol today. No excitement. We have things our own way out here now. Turned in at 2300.

Sunday, June 3, 1945

Up at 2400. Had to load smoke tanks last night. They are going to land troops on southern Okinawa today and we are to furnish smoke screens. Landing went OK. Tomorrow we refuel again, so are retiring a couple of hundred miles south tonight. I understand we are going down to Saki Shima to try and knock out some of the Jap air force around that area. It is near Formosa. The suiciders have been pretty active around there. Turned in at 2200.

Monday, June 4, 1945

Up at 0430. Fueled today, no flying. We are expecting a typhoon tonight. The afternoon has been stormy and it is getting rough. Turned in at 2200.

Tuesday, June 5, 1945

Up at 2300. The typhoon hit. What a nightmare! Was up all night trying to secure things. We have rolled horribly all night. Took one roll of 36 degrees and then another of 38. Thought we were goners. One destroyer capsized. Storm broke about 1600 this afternoon. We are all worn out. Our strike on Saki Shima is cancelled. We have been blown hundreds of miles off course. So far it will take us two days to get back to Okinawa. God has sure been with us this past 24 hours or we would have never made it.

Wednesday, June 6, 1945

Up at 0430. Tomorrow we are to hit Saki Shimas as planned. Have been warned to expect air attack. Turned in at 2200.

Thursday, June 7, 1945

Up at 0430. Today we got it. A couple of Jap planes came in strafing and one suicider into our flight deck. The other hit the water. It was a sneak attack and we weren't at battle stations. Tore a terrific hole in forward end of flight deck. Look like we will get stateside sooner than expected. Twenty one officers were killed, 229 men killed and several men injured. It set fire to a plane and the ship. It was quickly extinguished. The deck temporarily repaired so we could bomb as planned. Are leaving tonight for Okinawa again and will probably continue operating there until it is definitely secured. God has sure been with us today, we had other attacks all day long. Nerves area wreck tonight. Turned in 2300.

[I understand from my late husband Jim, Bob's son, that the kamikaze that hit the Natoma Bay didn't blow up so some member of the crew took the plane pieces and

made little good luck horseshoes out of the material which may have been magnesium. I have Bob's.]

Friday, June 8, 1945

Up at 0400. Continued bombing today. Also took time out to bury our dead from the kamikaze hit we took. All hands wonder when their turn will come for them to go over the side. Turned in at 2300.

Saturday, June 9, 1945

Up at 0430. More bombing today. The shipfitters have finished temporary repairs so we are operating normally again. We all wonder if we will get back to the states after this operation. Begins to look like we can go out again for the next. Turned in at 2400.

Sunday, June 10, 1945

Up at 0400. Bad luck dogged us today. My shipmate Manning AOM 2/C was hit by a whirling prop and though still alive is in awfully bad shape. Mangled badly. Later in the day we were taking on bombs and rockets from a destroyer, when a plane on the hanger deck burst into flames and we had a bad fire through out the hanger deck. Fire was brought under control in a short time without much damage to the ship. Lost a couple of planes. Our moral has hit a new low today. We feel now the luck of the Natoma Bay has run out, and we are a doomed ship. I guess the day the Jap hit us our luck fled. Turned in at 2300.

Monday, June 11, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued bombing Okinawa today, but not as extensively. We have absolute air control here now and the army has just about secured the island. Turned in at 2300.

Tuesday, June 12, 1945

Up at 0400. No bombing today. Just got word the army has complete control and are in the act of mopping up the island. Uneventful day for us. Turned in at 2200.

Wednesday, June 13, 1945

Up at 0430. No flying today as we are refueling. Expect to leave here any time now as our work is done. Possibly we will go back to Sake Shima a few days before heading back for Guam. Can't stay out much over a week now for food supplies are low. Food is bad eating now. Been eating all dehydrated food (punk). Turned in at 2000.

Thursday, June 14, 1945

Up at 0430. Aren't doing much here these days, an occasional bombing hop and some anti-sub hops. Just seem to be killing time. Expect to leave for Guam most any day. Sort of looks like our hopes for going stateside are dashed again. The scuttlebutt sort of sounds like we will be going to the China coast to operate. Haven't seen a Jap for quite a while, although we have been warned to expect a heavy air raid any day now. Turned in at 2400.

Friday, June 15, 1945

Up at 0430. Not much doing today. Very uneventful. Are furnishing target and local air patrol, very little bombing. The food is very punk these days. Looks like we might hang around for a while yet. Turned in at 2200.

Saturday, June 16, 1945

Up at 0430. Continued giving fighter coverage to Okinawa. No bombing today. Tomorrow we are to hit Saki Shima again. Hope we don't get hit again. Turned in at 2300.

Sunday, June 17, 1945

Up at 0200. Called to battle stations. Jap planes flying all around us, but they didn't come in to attack, just some more sleep killers. No Japs after daylight today. We dropped heavy bomb loads and tonight we are headed back to Okinawa. Turned in at 2100.

Monday, June 18, 1945

Up at 0430. Flew anti-sub patrol today. I flew the hop this afternoon, first one in quite a while. It felt good to be in the air again. Lowell Thomas came aboard tonight. Either he is on to go back to Guam with us, or write up a story on us. We expect to go back to Guam tomorrow night. Turned in 2200.

Tuesday, June 19, 1945

Up at 0430. Flew anti-sub patrol today. Lowell Thomas gave a speech today for us. Was then flown off somewhere. Jap planes bothered us all day today. Have been warned to expect heavy raids, but none so far. Just a few snooper planes.

Wednesday, June 20, 1945

Up at 0430. Anti-sub patrol today again. Tonight we leave for Guam and repairs. We are all hoping we will have to go to the states for them. Turned in at 2300.

Thursday, June 21, 1945

Up at 0430. Bound for Guam today. Will get there Sunday morning. Flew anti-sub patrol. Turned in at 2000.

Friday, June 22, 1945

Up at 0800. No flying today. Just loafed. Movies tonight, the first in weeks. Turned in at 2200.

Saturday, June 23, 1945

Up at 0430. Anti-sub today. Also had ships gunnery practice. I had to fly the target plane hop. Movies. Turned in at 2300.

[This is all there is in two diaries. There may have been a third but it was never found.—Pat Winne]