

Stanley Yasinski

U.S. Navy
USS San Gay



Stanley Yasinski
U.S. Navy
Served On Ammo Ship In Pacific

Stanley Yasinski joined the United States Navy at the age of 18 during WW II. He wrote the following about his experiences. After basic training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Illinois, I was sent to Port Chicago, California which is up river from San Francisco. I served on the USS San Gay which was an ammunition ship and also built to carry mines. My first voyage was July 19, 1943 to Pearl Harbor and back. Next, it was to Funafuti, Ellice Island. While there, we were going to supply ammo to 3 cruisers. We were ordered to go along the cruisers since they were senior in rank. Our Captain Ryan said it was not a good idea. We ended up damaging 2 float planes and a 40 mm gun mount before someone said that was enough. We were the backup ship for the Tarawa Campaign.

Other voyages took us to Majuro, the Marshall Islands, Roi, Efate, New Hebrides, Manus, Admiralty Island, Cape Cretin, New Guinea, Espir-

itu Santo, Eniwetok, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, Peleliu, Palaw Island, Kossal Passage, Palau Island, Ulithi, Kwajalein, Guam, Mariana Islands and Tinian. It was from Tinian that the Enola Gay Bomber flew to drop the first atomic bomb on Japan.

The Japanese had retreated from Majuro and left behind 2 people, a man and his wife who were scientists in the study of fish. They spoke fluent English and had been educated in the United States. We returned them to the US as prisoners. While in Cape Cretin we had a heavy rain storm and Army nurses came out to our ship in Army "Ducks" that were vehicles that can run on land or water. They came to get chocolate bars.

We headed for Port Chicago, CA and were 3 days away when 2 ammunition ships exploded there. We were told to go to the Mare Island Ammo Depot. While there, the black Navy personnel refused to load our ship. They were court martialed and given dishonorable discharges. These men left from Port Chicago and claimed that they were discriminated against as there were no white personnel that had to load or unload ships of ammunition. We had been in war zones for months, but the white personnel unloaded the ships of ammunition. No one dared to refuse to do it.

We were in the aftermath of a typhoon that hit off the Philippines and the ocean was really rough. While at anchor at Ulithi, ships came in that had been damaged in the storm. To get a picture of how high the waves were, the bows of several aircraft carriers were lifted up. Upon leaving Ulithi, we were hit by a Japanese torpedo from a 2-man submarine. Fortunately, it hit the bow of the ship where all the ammo had already been removed.

During the invasion of Peleliu, we had US destroyer on both sides of us getting ammo when a Japanese artillery round landed 300 feet from our bow. The captain had all 3 ships put in reverse. One of my side duties was Guard Mail. I had to strap on a .45 pistol to carry confidential mail and take it to other ships in the Captain's

Stanley Yasinkski

U.S. Navy
USS San Gay

Gig. Most memorable was going to the Battleship New Jersey. While on our way to Okinawa to the USS Terror to deliver mines, the ship was Kamikazied by a Japanese plane that killed 45 of their crew. It put the ship out of action and we were sent back to Guam.

After the war was over, we took out all the acoustic mechanisms from the mines and dumped them in the ocean on our [way] back to Pearl Harbor. Upon arriving there, I was transferred to the Navy Yard to Administrative Command Mine Craft Pacific Fleet. There I interviewed personnel from returning mine sweepers and sent out stories to their home town newspapers.

Stanley Uasinski served 3 years in the Navy and received the Asiatic Pacific Medal with 3 Stars, the American Campaign with Foreign Service Medal, the Victory Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.

Stanley Yasinski
Auburn, Illinois