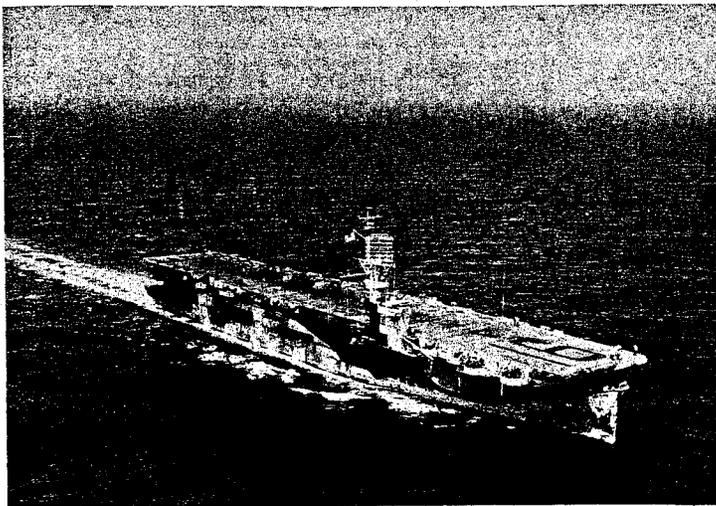


Our Fighting Ships Take Well Deserved Rest



U.S.S. MAKASSER STRAITS

The Mighty Mak Is Back From Many Months Of Active Duty

Open to Civilian and Naval Personnel for the forthcoming Navy Day Celebration will be the CVE Makasser Straits, known to the Navy as the "Mighty Mak." Commissioned on 27 April 1944 in the traditional manner, she sailed out of the docks on 13 May and made her shake-down cruise to the Majuro Atoll in the Marshall Islands. For many aboard this was their initial trip outside the continental limits of the United States.

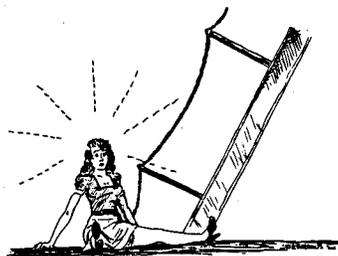
During September and October the "Mak" steamed across the equator for the first time, providing a notable "Shell-back" initiation for some five hundred of the ship's company. Returning to Pearl Harbor, the ship began the activity of pilot training.

On the 10th of January 1945, Commander (now Captain) Herbert D. Riley, USN, relieved Captain Berner as Commanding Officer. Two weeks later with Composite Squadron 97 in combat status, the ship sailed from Pearl Harbor to battle areas; Eniwetok, Guam and Ulithi.

With Task Force 58

The "Mighty Mak" saw its score of action while providing air cover for the logistic support group of the famous Task Force 58. They covered and completed missions at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, captured a Japanese fishing craft, six prisoners and bagged four enemy

aircraft. After pilot training and ferrying missions to Saipan, Leyte and Samar in the Philippines, to Roi, Kwajalein and the Marshalls, the ship was ordered to the states, and the NRB yard. After successfully taking care of 15,000 deck landings without mishap the "Mighty



Mak" is home to rest. She is being considered as a member of the "Magic Carpet Fleet."

Under her present CO, Captain John O. Lambrecht, USN, the Makasser Straits extends her invitation to all Civilian and Naval Personnel to visit the "Mighty Mak" and the crew that helped play their part in World War II.

"Can" Participates In 11 Major Operations Under Mitscher

Typical of the many fighting ships now coming into the Repair Base is the U.S.S. Stephen Potter, (DD-538). The Potter, which has participated in 11 "star" operations, is now at the base as a unit of the Inactive Fleet Reserve. Her present rest is a well-earned one.

Highlights of the hitherto unpublished record of the Potter include actions from the early Marshall Islands campaigns down to the strikes at Tokyo itself. During nineteen months with the fleet the Potter has helped account for seven Japanese planes, a submarine, and has been on hand in numerous carrier strikes, invasions, and rescues.

Commanding Officers of the Potter received the Legion of Merit and the Silver Star awards for the outstanding feats of this fighting "can," and the Potter always gave a good account of herself during her many brushes with the enemy.

The Potter is a California-built ship. She was commissioned in San Francisco on 21 October 1943. Her name is that of the first American Naval Aviator to down a German plane during World War I.

Among other actions, the Potter participated in the Marshall Islands, New Guinea, Marianas, Iwo Jima, Western Carolines, Leyte, Luzon, Philippines, and Okinawa operations. As a member of the Task Group 52.2, the Potter was a perennial part of the famous Fast Carrier Task Force of Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, which operated with the Third and Fifth Fleets.

It would be impossible to recount all of the exploits of the Potter in this short space, but a mention of some of the more spectacular incidents will give readers an idea of the Potter's fighting actions.

During the second carrier attack on Truk in the Carolinas, the Potter teamed with the U.S.S. Mac Donough (DD 351) to sink a Jap submarine. The C.O. of the Potter received the Legion of Merit for this action.

During the battle of the Eastern Philippine sea on the 19th and 20th of June, 1944, the Potter rescued seven downed pilots and air crewmen returning from the famous late afternoon strike. The Potter was one of the first American vessels to sight the Island of Luzon after its fall in 1942 when it participated in the initial attacks on that area as a picket for the Third Fleet.

The Potter was also in on the first attacks against Formosa, and assisted in escorting two damaged U. S. cruisers in a slow retreat from the scene, continually fighting off suicide and other air attacks. When the cruiser Houston was severely damaged as a result of these attacks, the Potter lay astern of the blazing ship and picked up 90 men. As a result of these daring and skillful actions the C.O. of the Potter, Commander Leonidas W. Pancoast, USN, received the Silver Star.

The plucky little "can" accompanied fast carrier attacks on Okinawa, Saigon, Hainan, Formosa, Kyushu, Kobe, Formosa and other points. While supporting the retirement of a damaged carrier from strikes on the Jap mainland in March, 1945, the Potter again underwent repeated dive-bombing attacks. During this time the ship was credited with destroying two planes. The carrier was successfully escorted to port.

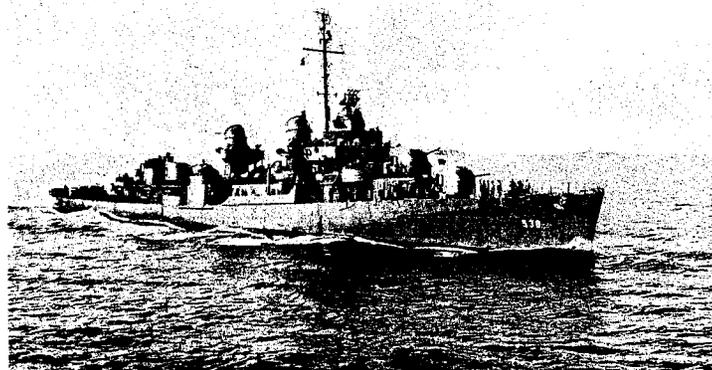
Saves 107 From Bunker Hill

Again when the U.S.S. Bunker Hill was damaged by suicide planes off Okinawa the Potter was in on the rescue work. The Potter rescued a total of 107 officers and men from the carrier while operating with other destroyers including the U.S.S. The Sullivans, a "can" which is also berthed at Pier One at the Repair Base.

On April 14, the Potter was given full credit for destroying a suicide plane before it did any damage to fleet units off Okinawa. Credit for assists in knocking down Jap planes numbered four between March 22 and May 14 of this year in addition to the planes given to the Potter alone. Not until the end of May did the Potter and other ships of its task group leave the Okinawa area for the Philippines and eventually for San Francisco and Mare Island for a much needed overhaul. The end of hostilities precluded the necessity of any further operations by the Potter, so the ship was sent to San Diego.

Of such stuff are the ships here at the Repair Base made. No doubt this account would be much more interesting from the mouth of one of the Potter's crew who could give more detailed information of the good ship's fighting career, but that is impossible here.

The NRB News will try to bring you the highlights of the careers of other interesting and worthy ships now based locally, in future editions.



U.S. S. Stephen Potter DD-538

U.S. Naval Base, San Diego, CA - Friday, 10-26-1945