

HISTORY OF THE USS COBBLER (SS 344)

On Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945, the USS COBBLER (SS 344) was launched in the yards of her builders, the Electric Boat Company, at Groton, Connecticut. The COBBLER was the fourth ship launched from the Electric Boat Company's yards in 1945 -- with only a little more than three months of the year gone.

Mrs. James B. Rutter, wife of Captain James B. Rutter, USN, christened the ship at the launching ceremonies.

At this point of the war, Easter Services were being held aboard other U.S. Navy ships -- only some four hundred miles from Tokyo. In his talk at the launching ceremonies, Lieutenant Commander John J. Shilling, USNR, Senior Chaplain, praised the work of submarines in World War II and expressed the hope that the war would be over before the COBBLER had the chance to get into combat.

The COBBLER was commissioned on August 8, 1945, at which time Commander James Bizzoll Grady, USN, assumed the duties as her first commanding officer. The war was within days of its end and Chaplain Shilling's hopes were to be realized.

The COBBLER was assigned to the U.S. Atlantic Fleet for duty and spent two months of intensive shakedown training; after which she cruised to Havana, Cuba, for a week. En route to Staten Island, New York, from Havana, she steamed via Key West, Florida, and Savannah, Georgia. She spent Navy Day of 1945 in the latter port of call.

January 1946 found the USS COBBLER's operating base changed to Key West, Florida, where she remained until December 1948, making numerous trips to Guantanamo Bay and Havana, Cuba. During her operations out of Key West the SS 344 weathered four hurricanes, which occurred October 6, 1946; October 11, 1947; September 20 and October 5, 1948.

On December 6, 1948, the COBBLER entered the yards of the Electric Boat Company at Groton, Connecticut, for conversion to a streamlined Guppy II type submarine. This conversion was completed August 17, 1949, and on the 27th of the same month the submarine reported to Submarine Squadron SIX at Norfolk, Va., for duty.

September and October 1949 were spent in refresher and type training. Then, from October 31 to November 22, 1949, the COBBLER was an active unit in the NOVEX Fleet Problem in an area reaching from the Virginia Capes north to the Davis Strait.

For the period November 24th, 1949, to January 2, 1950, the COBBLER remained at Norfolk, Virginia. During February and March of 1950, she participated in the FORTREX and CARIBEX exercises.

By Directive dated March 1946, the USS COBBLER (SS 344) is still assigned to active duty, attached to the U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

OVERALL LENGTH:	310 feet
BEAM:	27 feet
DISPLACEMENT:	1,525 tons
SPEED:	20 knots plus

WELCOME ABOARD



U.S.S. COBBLER
SS-344

The USS COBBLER (SS344) was launched April 1, 1945 and commissioned August 18, 1945, being named for a killer fish of the Pompano Family. Her initial home port was Key West, Florida, which she left in December 1948 to be converted to a Guppy Submarine. She received a snorkel tube so she would not need to surface for recharging of batteries, streamlining and increased battery capacity for greater submerged endurance. In August of 1949, COBBLER became a unit of Submarine Squadron SIX, based in Norfolk, Virginia.

During the next five years, COBBLER participated in most of the Atlantic Fleet Exercises involving submarines. In July of 1954 she was again modernized by further battery improvements. Following her yard period in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, COBBLER was active in Submarine Squadron SIX operations, including a "First" for sailing up the James River to Richmond, Virginia for Armed Forces Day. She also participated in the International Naval Review in June 1957, served with the SIXTH Fleet in the Mediterranean during the winter of 1957-58, and took part in many fleet exercises including Operation Springboard in 1955, 57, and 59. In 1960 COBBLER was awarded the Battle Efficiency "E" for Submarine Squadron SIX.

In January 1962, COBBLER entered Philadelphia Naval Shipyard where she began an extensive conversion to a Guppy III Submarine. This conversion consisted of lengthening the hull by fifteen feet to provide room for new electronics installations as well as additional crew's berthing spaces. Upon completion of the conversion in October 1962, COBBLER became a unit of Submarine Squadron TWO in New London, Connecticut.

In October 1963, COBBLER served again with the SIXTH Fleet in the Mediterranean, taking part in numerous ASW exercises with French, British and Turkish Navies. In August 1964 COBBLER participated in fleet exercises, visiting Bermuda and Halifax, Nova Scotia. During January 1965 COBBLER again participated in Operation Springboard, and upon her return, made preparations for entering Philadelphia Naval Shipyard for her third overhaul there. Upon completion of her overhaul, COBBLER returned to New London and carried out local operations until May 1966, when she deployed. Upon return to New London in July 1966, COBBLER participated in local operations until November 1966. After a holiday leave period she deployed to the Mediterranean for duty with the Sixth Fleet until April 1967 when she returned to New London for duty with the U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

Since completion of shipyard overhaul in July 1968, COBBLER participated in various ASW training exercises including Operation Springboard '69. In March 1969, CDR S.G. ALEXANDER relieved as Commanding Officer. During 1967 COBBLER visited Portsmouth England, Londonderry, N.Ireland and Bermuda, as well as Caribbean ports.

CDR ALEXANDER graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1956. He served aboard the Cruiser USS LOS ANGELES and Submarines USS PIPER, USS GROUPE, USS J.C. CALHOUN and USS BANG. His shore duty assignments have been at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School and on the Staff of the Commander, U.S. Submarine Force, Atlantic.

UNITED STATES SUBMARINE COBBLER(SS344)

Built by Electric Boat Division, Groton, Conn.

Launched - 1 April 1945

Commissioned - 8 August 1945

CONVERTED TO GUPPY II by Electric Boat Division - December 1948-August 1949

CONVERTED TO GUPPY III by Philadelphia Naval Shipyard - January 1962-September 1962

COMMANDED BY

CDR J.B. GRADY, USN AUG '45 - MAR '46

CDR W.G. HOLMAN, USN MAR '46 - JUN '48

CDR A.L. REDON, USN JUN '48 - AUG '50

LCDR H.P. McNEAL, USN AUG '50 - JUL '52

LCDR R.H. HARWOOD, USN JUL '52 - JUL '54

LCDR W.B. PRIGMORE, USN JUL '54 - AUG '56

LCDR L.G. YEICH, USN AUG '56 - AUG '58

LCDR F.F. CLIFFORD, USN AUG '58 - AUG '60

AWARDED BATTLE EFFICIENCY E

SUBMARINE SQUADRON SIX - FY 1960

LCDR R.M. WEIDMAN, Jr., USN AUG '60-AUG '63

AWARDED ENGINEERING E

SUBMARINE SQUADRON SIX - FY 1961

CDR P.L. FULLINWIDER, USN AUG '63 - JUN '65

AWARDED FIRE CONTROL E

SUBMARINE DIVISION TWENTY-ONE - FY 1965

LCDR A.B. ANDERSON, USN JUN '65 - JUN '67

AWARDED BATTLE EFFICIENCY E

SUBMARINE DIVISION TWENTY-ONE - FY 1967

CDR A.H. GILMORE, USN JUN '67 - MAR '69

AWARDED BATTLE EFFICIENCY E AND FIRE CONTROL E

SUBMARINE DIVISION TWENTY-ONE - FY 1969

CDR S.G. ALEXANDER, USN MAR '69 -