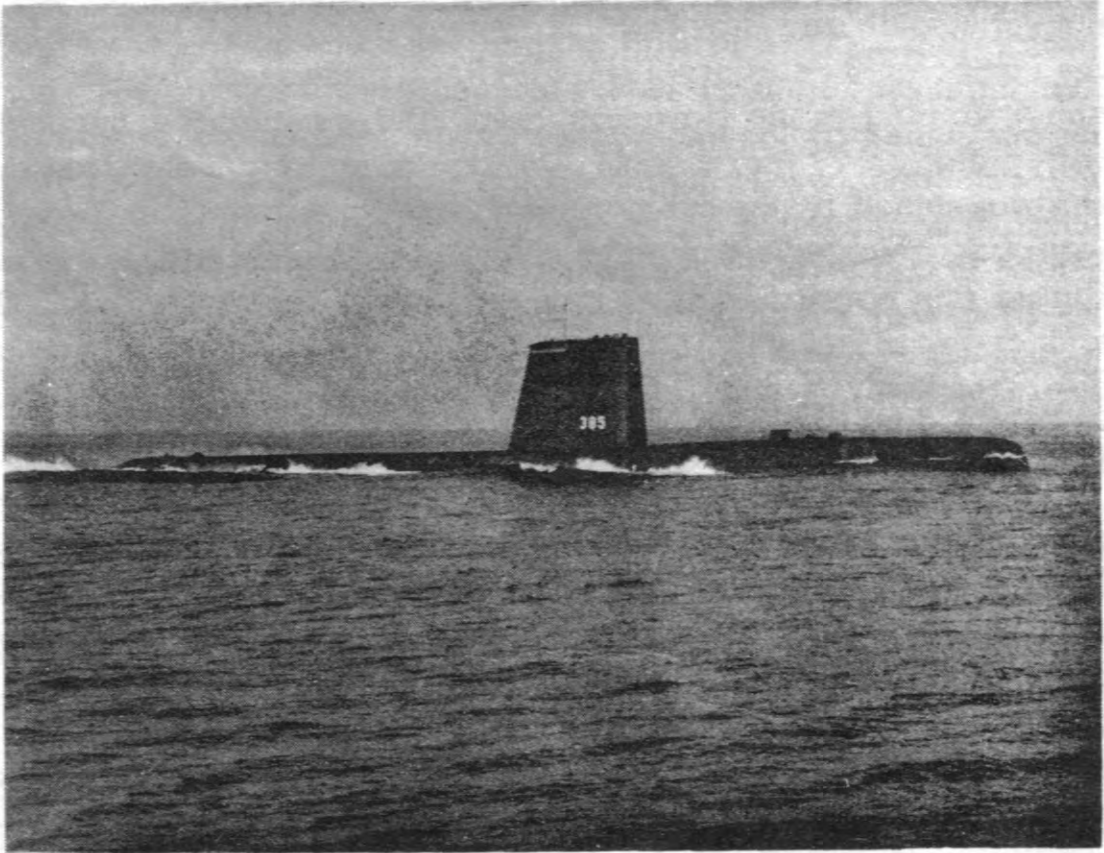


Ship's History

U. S. S. BANG (SS-385)



COMMISSIONED 4 DECEMBER 1943

DECOMMISSIONED TO RESERVE FLEET 12 FEBRUARY 1947

RECOMMISSIONED 1 FEBRUARY 1951

DECOMMISSIONED FOR CONVERSION 15 MAY 1952

RECOMMISSIONED AS GUPPY IIA 4 OCTOBER 1952

The BANG's third war patrol resulted in its worst depth charge attack. While enroute to its assigned area contact was made on an enemy convoy. A successful attack was made resulting in the sinking of two loaded freighters, but the escorts sighted the periscope and torpedo wakes. BANG sought deep submergence as the escorts started a coordinated depth charge attack. Sixteen charges exploded just over the ship, forcing her deep and almost causing loss of depth control. After this attack, the escorts departed. There was minor damage throughout, but nothing so serious as to force return to port. On 19 September another convoy was contacted and BANG made a successful attack resulting in the sinking of one freighter and damaging another. Here too, the convoy escorts made contact and BANG experienced another severe depth charging. BANG evaded by mid-afternoon and surfaced after dark with ten torpedoes remaining. The next day another convoy was sighted. After dark a surface attack was made and one large tanker and one medium freighter went to the bottom. This time counter attacks were ineffective. With all torpedoes expended BANG returned to Midway for refit on 29 September 1944.

During the fourth war patrol off the northeast coast of Formosa the BANG teamed up with the REDFIN and SHAD. On 22 November, shortly after dark, the REDFIN made contact on an enemy convoy proceeding eastward from northern Formosa. The Wolfpack commenced coordinated attacks about mid-night and between that time and 0300, BANG fired all 24 torpedoes in a series of seven surface radar attacks, sinking three freighters, a mine-layer escort, and damaging another freighter. The entire convoy was practically obliterated. After its last attack the BANG was forced to retire with enemy escorts on both beams at less than 2000 yards, but there was no indication of detection by the escorts. On 5 December BANG arrived at Pearl Harbor for refit.

The fifth war patrol, because of extremely bad weather, was unproductive for the BANG. Three torpedoes were fired at a small freighter which was alerted and avoided the torpedoes. The BANG returned to Guam to be refitted by the USS PROTEUS. During this period the Commanding Officer was relieved by the Executive Officer, LCDR O. W. Bagby, USN.

On the sixth patrol BANG was assigned lifeguard duty and rescued one downed aviator. On 10 May 1945 she arrived at

SHIP'S HISTORY

The USS BANG (SS-385) was built at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard at Kittery, Maine. The keel was laid on 30 April 1943 and BANG was launched four months later on 30 August 1943. The ship was commissioned on 4 December 1943 with LCDR A. R. Gallagher, USN, Commanding.

Initial outfitting and underway training was accomplished in the Portsmouth and New London areas and the ship departed for the Pacific on 8 February 1944. The BANG underwent final operational training in the Hawaiian area, and commenced her first war patrol on 29 March 1944. On departure from Pearl Harbor she was joined by the submarines PARCHE and TINOSA to form a wolfpack which would interdict shipping in the South China Sea. During this patrol the BANG received credit for sinking 20,200 tons of Japanese shipping, consisting of an attack transport, a destroyer and a supply ship. Having expended all torpedoes, she returned to Midway for refit on 14 May 1944.

On 6 June the BANG departed Midway for her second war patrol. On 25 June 1944 the BANG joined with the submarines GROWLER and SEAHORSE near southeast Formosa, forming a coordinated attack group commanded by LCDR Gallagher of the BANG. On 29 June the group encountered a southbound convoy, and during a series of periscope attacks BANG fired ten torpedoes at three ships, all of which were adjudged sunk. Convoy escorts retaliated with a prolonged depth charge counter-attack, expending 125 depth charges. BANG was not damaged by this weapons barrage. Upon returning to periscope depth, BANG observed the remainder of the convoy disappearing over the horizon. After a week-long chase, BANG gained position ahead of the convoy and commenced a night surface attack against a large cargo ship. As the range closed to 4,000 yards, BANG shifted her attack to a screening destroyer. At 1,300 yards the destroyer turned to attack as BANG fired 3 torpedoes "down the throat" and dove. The torpedoes missed, but the destroyer missed too, and BANG sweated out another depth charging before returning to periscope depth. Further attempts to attack this group were thwarted by air and surface escorts. On 2 August BANG arrived back at Pearl Harbor for refit.

Pearl Harbor where she was ordered to proceed to Hunter's Point. From there she departed for Portsmouth Naval Shipyard to be overhauled. While at Portsmouth, hostilities were terminated.

The USS BANG's final score for the war was 94,000 tons sunk, 36,550 tons damaged, one aviator rescued. The ship received five combat pins, and her first skipper was awarded the Navy Cross four times.

After the war BANG operated with the fleet until February 1947 when she was decommissioned and placed in the "moth-ball fleet" at New London, Connecticut.

On 1 February 1951, BANG was recommissioned being one of the first ships to be recalled to active duty. Her active duty was short lived, for she was soon selected for Shipyard conversion to become the First Guppy II A Type submarine. On 4 October 1952, the BANG emerged a new type Navy warrior. Although her hull remained unchanged and her outward appearance not unlike many other Guppy submarines, her internal arrangement belied an aggressive submarine construction program. Improvements in electronic equipment and hull streamlining were the results of lessons learned during the war and experiments carried on afterwards. The latest ordnance developments and additional submerged power were installed to increase the ship's offensive capabilities.

Early in 1962, the ship visited Mediterranean and Northern European ports in company with ships of Task Group Bravo. Stops were made at Lisbon, Rotterdam, Glasgow, Antwerp, Bremerhaven, Portsmouth, London, and Rota, Spain. During the first half of 1967 this ship was overhauled at Philadelphia Naval Shipyard to repair all major equipment and to install the newest designs in electronic assemblies.

BANG is assigned to Submarine Force, United States Atlantic Fleet, home port New London, Connecticut.

