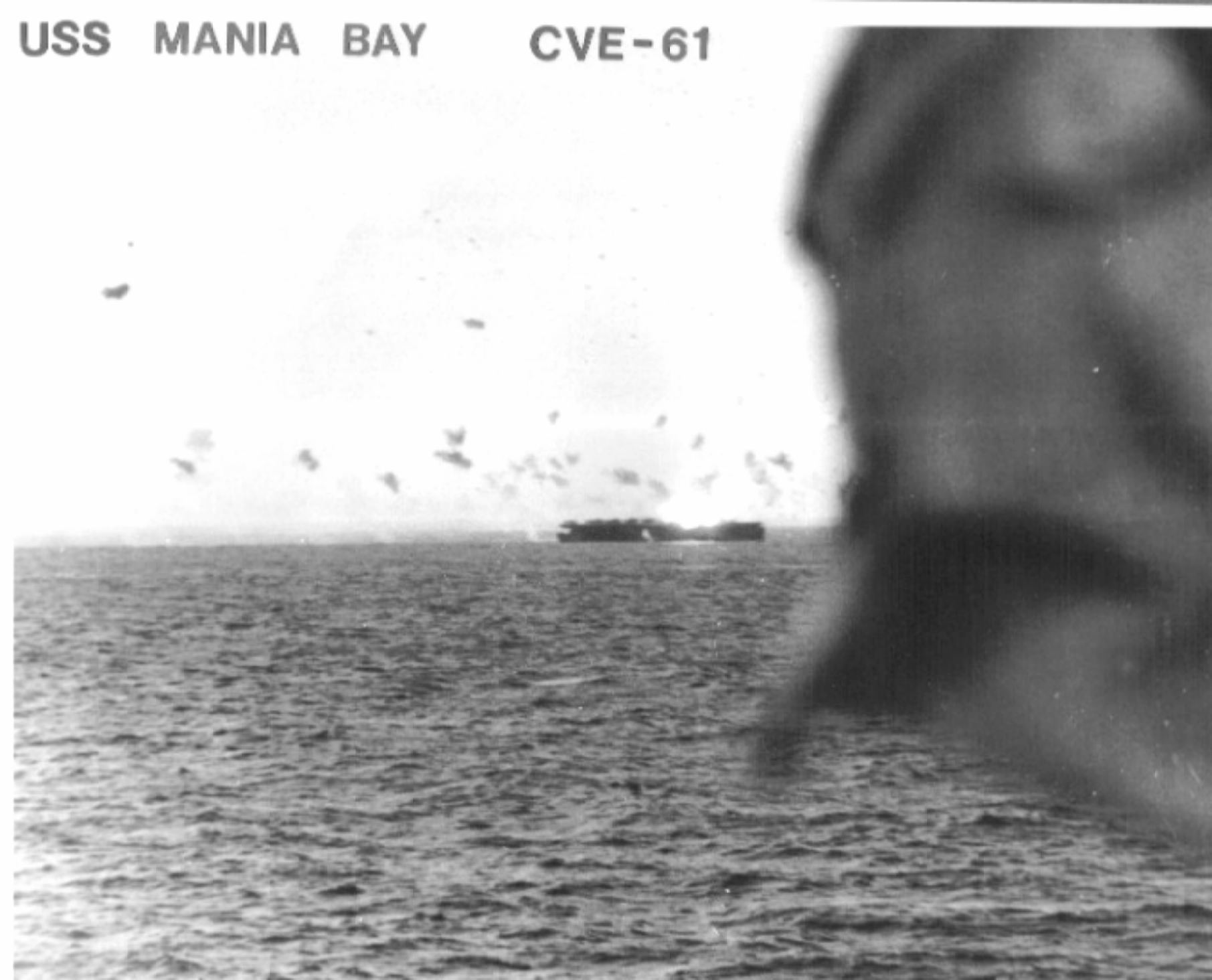


USS MANIA BAY

CVE-61



USS MANILA BAY



United States Ship

U.S.S. MANILA BAY (CVE-61)

Manila Bay (CVE-61) was laid down as Bucareli Bay (ACV-61); renamed Manila Bay 3 April 1943; launched 10 July 1943; reclassified CVE-61 on 15 July 1943; and commissioned the same day at Astoria, Oregon, Captain Boynton L. Braun in command.

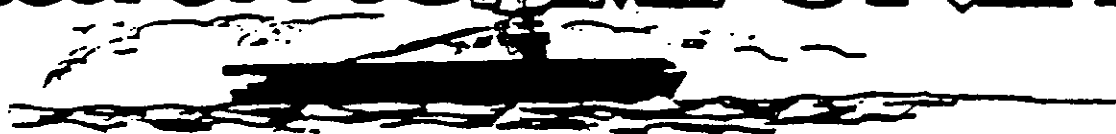
Manila Bay sailed for Pearl Harbor 20 November and returned a load of damaged planes to San Diego 4 December. Joining TF 52, she sortied 22 January for the invasion of the Marshalls. Her planes bombed and strafed enemy positions from Kwajalein Island north to Bigej Island. Manila Bay sailed for overhaul at Pearl Harbor where she arrived 18 May. Manila Bay sailed 5 June for the Marianas. Steaming via Eniwetok, she reached the eastern approaches to Saipan on 19 June. Manila Bay returned to Pearl Harbor 31 August. Two days later Captain Fitzhugh Lee took command of the veteran ship; Manila Bay departed 15 September as a unit of CarDiv 24. Steaming via Eniwetok, she reached Manus 3 October. As Manila Bay cruised to the east of Leyte Gulf with other carriers of Rear Admiral Felix B. Stamp's Taffey 2 (TU 77.4.2), powerful Japanese naval forces converged upon the Philippines and launched a three-pronged offensive to drive the Americans from Leyte. Manila Bay sent an eight-plane strike against ground targets on Leyte. Manila Bay launched two airstrikes during the enemy pursuit of Taffey 3 and two more as the Japanese retreated. At 0830 she sent four torpedo-laden TBMs and a seven plane escort to join the desperate fight. Three launched torpedoes at a battleship, probably Yamato, but she combed the wakes. The fourth plane launched her torpedo at a heavy cruiser, most likely Chitama. As the Japanese ships broke off attack and circled off Samar, the fierce airstrikes continued. At 1120 Manila Bay launched four TBMs, carrying 500-pound bombs, and four bombers from other carriers. Later that afternoon, Manila Bay's CAP intercepted a Japanese bomber-fighter strike about 50 miles north of Taffey 2. Her four fighters broke up the enemy formation.

Manila Bay resumed air operations in support of Leyte ground forces 27 October. Late on 30 October she sailed for the Admiralties, arriving Manus 4 November. After steaming to Kossol Passage late in November Manila Bay departed 10 December to provide air cover for the Mindoro invasion convoys. Manila Bay splashed one kamikaze. A second schedule plane hit Hanaden. After a trip to Manus, Manila Bay sortied New Year's Day 1945 with ships of the Luzon Attack Force. The task groups steamed via Sunigao Strait and the Mindanao Sea. Enemy nuisance and suicide raids began in earnest 4 January. The enemy air attacks intensified 5 January. Patrolling fighters broke up morning and early afternoon strikes shooting down numerous raiders. Just before 1750, two kamikazes dove at Manila Bay from the portside. The first plane hit the flight deck to starboard and splashed off the fantail. Within 24 hours she resumed limited air operations.

Manila Bay had 14 men killed and 52 wounded, but by 10 January she resumed full duty in support of the Lingayen gulf operations. She closed the coast of Okinawa 13 June. She departed for the Marianas 20 June and operated out of Guam and Eniwetok. Manila Bay steamed to the Aleutians in mid-August. She departed Adak on 31 August. She returned to Pearl Harbor on 24 September. Assigned to "Magic Carpet" duty, she departed Pearl Harbor on 27 January 1946 and reached Norfolk, Virginia, 18 February. She steamed to Boston 15 to 17 April, decommissioned there 31 July 1946. Her name was struck from the Navy list 27 May 1958; and she was sold for scrap to Hugo New Corporation, 2 September 1959.

Manila Bay received eight battle stars for World War II service.

THE Manila BAYONET

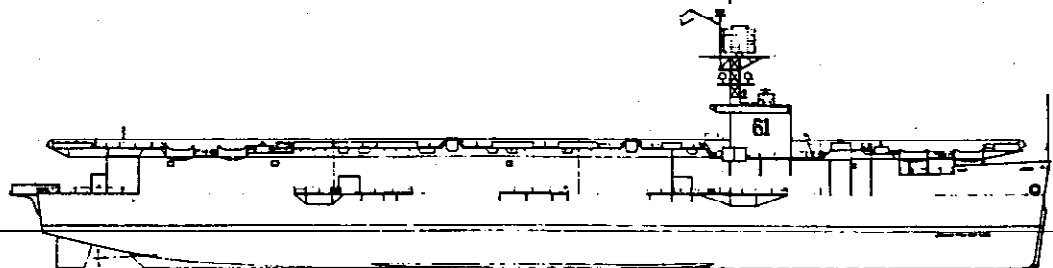
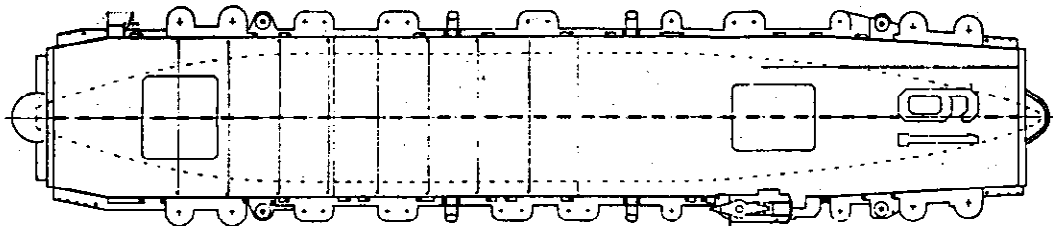


DIV. 24
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V.C. 72
V.C. 80
V.C. 71

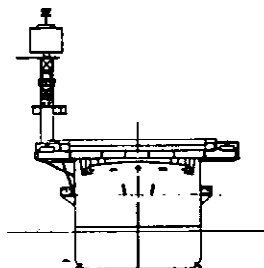
The Ship That Fought The Best

NOVEMBER 1995

CVE 61



USN ESCORT CARRIER
MANILA BAY CVE-61
KEEL LAID 1-15-43, LAUNCHED 7-10-43, COMM 10-5-43
10,200 TONS, 18 KNOTS
L = 498'10", Bm = 65'0", DR = 19'6"
21 AIRCRAFT
1-5⁷/₃₂, 8-40 M/M TWR, 20-20 M/M



THE Manila BAYONET

DIV. 24
V.C. 7
V.C. 72
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USS MANILA BAY