



USS MATANIKAU CVE-101

United States Ship
U.S.S. MATANIKAN (CVE-101)

Matanikau (CVE-101) was laid down as Dolomi Bay under Maritime Commission contract by Kaiser Co. Inc. Vancouver, Wash, 10 March 1944; renamed Matanikau 26 April 1944; launched 22 May 1944; sponsored by Mrs. Robert A. Grant; delivered to the Navy 24 June 1944; and commissioned at Astoria, Oreg. the same day, Capt. W.L. Erdmann in command.

Following the training in Puget Sound, Matanikau steamed to San Diego 25 July. After embarking 191 military passengers and loading 56 planes, she departed 1 August on an extended shakedown and ferrying run to the South Pacific. She touched at Espiritu Santo and Finschafen; reached Manus, Admiralties, 23 August; and, after discharging men and planes, she carried 112 sailors and 41 damaged aircraft back to the west coast, arriving San Diego 19 September. Matanikau's run to the Admiralties and back marked her closest advance to sea war in the Pacific. On 14 October she embarked Composite Squadron 93 and began duty as qualifications carrier for naval and marine aviators. Operating along the west coast out of San Diego, she played an important, if unspectacular, role while training hundreds of pilots during the closing months of World War II.

For more than 8 months she conducted flight training and qualifications landings. Between January and June 1945 she qualified 1,332 aviators, and during these 6 months pilots completed 12,762 landings on her flight deck. On 25 May alone fighter and torpedo planes of Marine Air Groups CVS-454 and CVS-321 made 602 daylight landings.

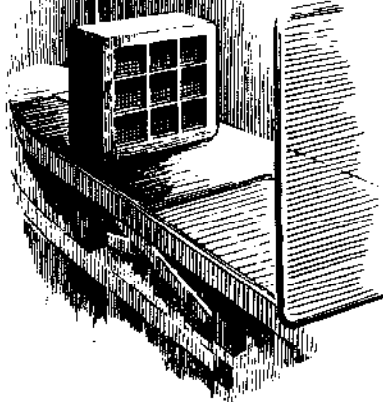
Matanikau departed San Diego 28 July and carried 65 planes and 158 troops to the Marshalls. Operating under Carrier Transport Squadron, Pacific Fleet, she reached Roi Island, Kwajalein, 10 August, then returned to Pearl Harbor the 16th. On 31 August she sailed for the western Pacific to support occupation in Japan. As a unit of T_f 4, she reached Ominato, Honshu, 11 September. During the next 2 weeks she supported operations along the northern coast of Honshu, including landings by the 8th Army at Aomori 25 September. After steaming to Yokosuka, she departed Tokyo Bay 30 September, touched at Guam and Pearl Harbor, and arrived San Francisco 23 October.

Assigned to "Magic Carpet" duty, Matanikan between 3 and 19 November steamed to Saipan where she embarked more than 1,000 returning veterans. Departing for the west coast the 21st, she reached San Pedro 5 December. Six days later she again sailed for the Marianas. She arrived Guam 27 December, embarked 795 troops of the 3d Marine Division, and departed the next day for China. Arriving Taku 3 January 1946. Matanikau debarked the marines who were part of an American force supporting the Chinese Nationalist in their struggle against the Communists for control of China.

Matanikau sailed for the United States 9 January and entered San Diego harbor the 29th. Between 1 and 5 February she steamed to Tacoma, Wash. where she remained during the next 8 months in an inactive status. She decommissioned 11 October 1946 and entered the Pacific Reserve Fleet. While berthed at Tacoma, Matanikan was reclassified CMHE-101 on 15 June 1955, and again reclassified AKV-36 on 7 May 1959. Ordered disposed of in March, 1960.

Matanikan was struck from the Navy list 1 April 1960. She was sold to Jacq. Pierot Jr. & Sons of New York 27 July 1960.

U S S M A T A N I K A U.



Bullhorn

Vol. 1—No. 1

24 June 1944

THE COMMISSIONING PROGRAM

Assembly of the crew

Music by the Naval Air Station Band

Captain J. D. Barner, USN, Commanding Officer, Naval Station,
Astoria, Oregon, is received at the Gangway

Prayer by Chaplain W. V. Johnson, USNR

Reading of Commissioning Orders and Remarks by Captain J. D. Barner, USN

Commissioning of the Ship by Captain J. D. Barner, USN

The National Anthem and Hoisting of the Colors

The Command is Transferred to Captain W. L. Erdmann, USN

Reading of Orders to Command and Remarks by Captain W. L. Erdmann, USN

Posting of the Watch by Commander J. R. Dillon, USN, Executive Officer

The Sounding of Retreat

COMMISSIONING ISSUE

THE SKIPPER

Big-set, Hoosier-bred Captain W. L. Erdmann was born in Greensburg, Indiana. Upon completion of his high school training, he was appointed to the United States Naval Academy and graduated in the class of 1924.

His first assignment was on the USS California and lasted until 1928 when he was transferred to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida. He received his wings in 1928 and was assigned to duty on the cruiser, USS Cincinnati. In 1931, after having served on board the USS Oklahoma, he went to shore duty at San Diego. Two years later he was sent to the USS Saratoga with VF-1. Detached from this ship in 1935, he became senior aviator on the USS Louisville, and from 1936 to 1938 he was attached to the Bureau of Aeronautics at Washington, D. C. In 1938 he was assigned to Patrol Wing Four which operated between Seattle and Alaska. Early in 1941 he assumed command and formed Patrol Wing Six in Alameda, California, and in June of that year he moved his squadron to the Support Force being formed in the North Atlantic. In October, 1941, he fitted out the squadron with Lockheed-Hudsons, the first land plane patrol bombers which the Navy had. He continued serving in the North Atlantic until July, 1942, when he was once again assigned to the Bureau of Aeronautics. He was then ordered to help form the new Naval Air Operational Training Command, and later became Training Officer of that command. In September, 1943, he was attached to Admiral Halsey's staff in the South Pacific from which he was assigned to the USS Matanikau.

For his conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty, Captain Erdmann has twice been decorated—The Legion of Merit from duty in the North Atlantic and the Bronze Star while serving in the South Pacific.

THE SKIPPER SPEAKS

The government has delivered to us today a new escort aircraft carrier. We are the crew that will man and fight on that ship. From today on, we must prepare the ship and ourselves to take our place in the great American Fleet, ready in all respects for any assignment we may receive. The performance of this ship in the Fleet will be measured by our ability to carry out those assignments.

You have completed your training with success in the various Pre-Commissioning Schools and on the training carrier. By continuing to skillfully apply that training, this ship will have to be successful.

Our ship has been named in honor of the American Forces that so gallantly fought the battle on the Matanikau River during the Guadalcanal campaign. Those men have given us a heritage that to be worthy of serving in a ship dedicated to their brave deeds, we will have to perform our duties with distinction.

I welcome you all aboard the USS Matanikau. With God's help we will make her the best and one in which we will all be proud to have served.



CAPTAIN WILLIAM L. ERDMANN, USN
Commanding Officer, USS Matanikau

THE SHIP



USS MATANIKAU

THE COMMISSIONING PRAYER

Almighty and Everlasting God, Thou who hast promised to hear the prayers of Thy people if they will but call on Thee, we beseech Thee, look in mercy upon the Commissioning Exercises of this ship. As we go forth to take our place in our country's Navy, we thank Thee for the heritage which is ours, and in humble gratitude we offer and present unto Thee ourselves, our souls and bodies to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice unto the cause which we serve, to hasten the day when peace and righteousness shall reign upon the face of the earth.

O Lord, our God, we ask Thy help and blessing upon the Captain, officers and men of this ship. Grant that we may cheerfully perform all our necessary duties; preserve us amidst the dangers and temptations which beset us; make us apt and able, that in all things we may acquit ourselves like men to the honor of our high calling; and when the battle of life is o'er, bring us safely into the Haven of Thy everlasting Kingdom, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who livest and reignest with Thee and the Holy Ghost, One True God, world without end. Amen.

THE EXEC

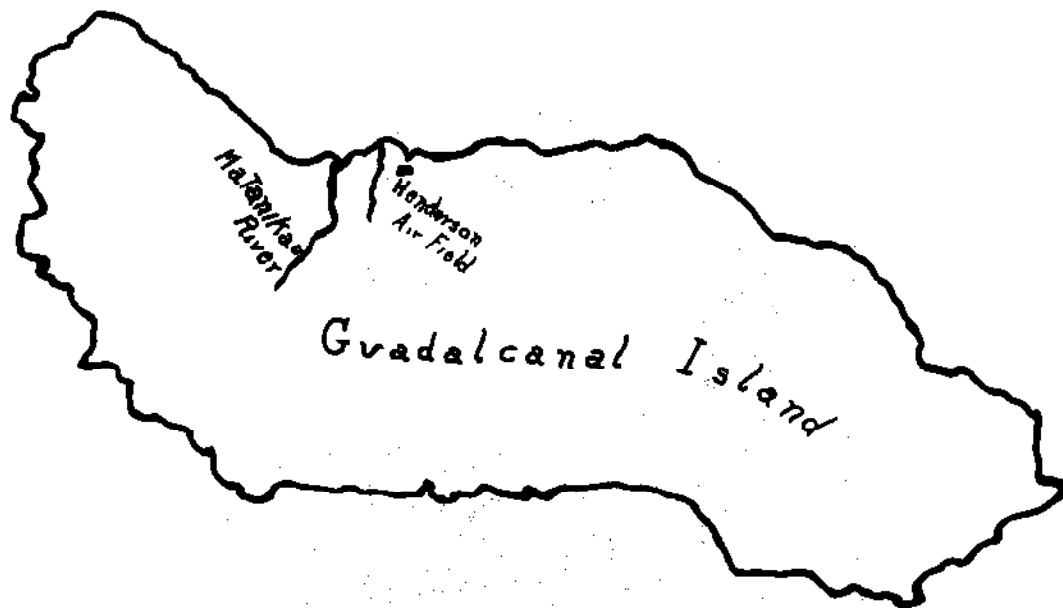


COMMANDER J. R. DILLON, USN
Executive Officer, USS Matanikau

Our executive officer was born on 18 March 1911 in Portland, Maine. After attending the Portland public schools, he competed in the state entrance examinations for the U. S. Naval Academy, and was appointed 15 July 1929.

Upon graduating 1 June 1933, his first duty afloat was on board the USS Pennsylvania where he served as Junior Division Officer for two and one half years. In February, 1936 he was ordered to flight training at Pensacola, Fla., where he received his wings on 1 April 1937. Next came a tour of duty with Fighting Squadron 3 attached to the USS Saratoga which lasted until June, 1938. He then served two and one half years on board the USS Quincy in Cruiser Scouting Squadron 7. During this time he made two trips to South American ports including passage through the Straits of Magellan. On November, 1940 he was appointed an instructor at the Jacksonville Naval Air Station. After eight months of service, he was ordered to the Staff of Commander, Patrol Wings, Atlantic Fleet where he served for two and one half years. Detached from this duty February, 1944, he became Air Officer of the USS Shipley Bay, CVE-85, while that ship was being placed in commission. This tour of duty was cut short by his promotion to the rank of Commander, and on 4 May he was detached to assume duty on board the USS Matanikau.

THE SHIP'S NAME



Ten miles west of historic Henderson Air Field on Guadalcanal flow the murky waters of Matanikau River. There on the night of October 22, 1942 the Japanese began a vicious land assault against the Marine-held air field. Although thrown back with heavy losses, the Japs, supported by newly arrived naval aid, continued to press forward. For a brief period on October 26, following the all-out enemy attack, the question of whether or not we could retain Henderson Field hung in the balance. A counter-attack spear-headed by Marines and Army troops, however, restored our lines. Finally on 31 October the Marines, supported by naval forces which bombarded the beach-head and destroyed stores and ammunition, crossed the Matanikau River and began the offensive which eventually resulted in the extermination of the Japanese from Guadalcanal.

In grateful memory to those who first turned back the invaders and began the victorious march toward Tokio, we dedicate our ship and ourselves to the unfinished task which lies before us.

THE SHIP'S OFFICERS

Captain W. L. Erdmann, USN
Commander J. R. Dillon, USN
Lt. Cmdr. B. F. Floyd Jr., USNR
Lt. Comdr. C. R. Tassan, USNR
Lieut. D. J. Rose, USNR
Lieut. R. L. Atkinson, USNR
Lieut. W. S. Murray, USNR
Lieut. P. J. Deering, USNR
Lieut. J. R. Bird, USNR
Lieut. H. E. Osborn, USNR
Lieut. L. Thompson, USNR
Lieut. W. C. Ridgway, USNR
Lieut. D. T. Deering, USNR
Lieut. R. L. Smith, USNR
Lieut. R. M. Williams, USNR
Lt. (jg) D. E. Peterson, USNR
Lt. (jg) J. R. Black, USNR
Lt. (jg) J. E. Wilder, USNR
Lt. (jg) A. L. Stoffel, USNR

Lt. (jg) W. V. Johnson, USNR
Lt. (jg) W. A. Cornwell, USNR
Lt. (jg) C. W. Close Jr., USNR
Lt. (jg) E. F. Selfing, USNR
Lt. (jg) C. W. Gilbert, USNR
Lt. (jg) J. F. Cottrell, USN
Lt. (jg) W. B. Renner, USNR
Ensign J. L. Pease, USNR
Ensign H. E. Wolf, USNR
Ensign E. A. Leslie, USNR
Ensign N. Poole, USN
Ensign B. J. Farrell, USNR
Ensign H. L. Lindquist, USNR
Ensign D. M. Avery, USNR
Ensign N. P. Benner, USNR
Ensign A. W. Martin, USNR
Ensign E. E. Renaker Jr., USN
Ensign J. F. Hart, USNR
Ensign J. M. Gray Jr., USNR

Ensign J. C. McCall, USNR
Ensign P. F. Gerber, USNR
Ensign P. N. Goodmonson, USNR
Ensign G. F. Diekman, USNR
Ensign J. R. Shepherd, USNR
Ensign W. H. Wheeler, USNR
Ensign R. C. O'Connell, USNR
Ch. Carp. R. M. Beebe, USNR
Mach. R. L. Beard, USN
Aerog. F. A. Magill, USN
Gnr. J. E. Caldwell, USN
Bos'n H. P. Crook, USN
Rad. Elec. V. A. Peterson, USNR
Elec. F. H. Schiedeck, USN
Mach. L. F. Olinger, USN
Mach. A. J. Rutkowski, USN
Sh. Clk. J. L. Holland, USN
P.C. N. C. Ryan, USNR

THE DEPARTMENT HEADS

AIR OFFICER



C. R. Tassan
Lt. Comdr., USNR

MEDICAL OFFICER



B. F. Floyd Jr.
Lt. Comdr., USNR

FIRST LIEUTENANT



D. J. Rose
Lt., USNR

ENGINEERING OFFICER



B. L. Atkinson
Lt., USNR

NAVIGATOR



W. S. Murray
Lt., USNR

SUPPLY OFFICER



M. B. Osborn
Lt., USNR

GUNNERY OFFICER



L. Thompson
Lt., USNR

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER



W. C. Ridgway
Lt., USNR

CHAPLAIN



W. V. Johnson
Lt. (jg), USNR

CENSORIALLY SPEAKING

Your ship is commissioned, and you are now on sea duty. Your life and the lives of your fellow sailors are dependent on security. Don't talk or write of your ship's movements or schedule.

Here are some regulations regarding censorship and correct procedure for personal mail:

1) You are not allowed to mail letters or postcards, etc. through any Post Office ashore. All mail must be deposited unsealed in the Post Office aboard the USS MATANIKAU.

2) Write on one side of the sheet only. Place your name at the bottom of each sheet.

3) Your official return address is:

John Doe S2C 1st Division
USS Matanikau (CVE 101)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

No other address will be used. Notify your correspondents of this address, but in no case will you divulge where you are.

4) ~~Here are some of the prohibited topics:~~

a) The location, identity, movement, or prospective movement of any merchant ship, aircraft, naval vessel, or naval or military force.

b) The defensive or offensive forces, weapons, installations or plans of the United States or her Allies.

c) The routine or employment of any naval or military unit of the United States or her Allies.

d) The effects of enemy operations, or casualties to personnel or material suffered by the United States or her Allies, previous to the official publication of such information.

e) The criticism of equipment, appearance, physical condition, or morale of the collective or individual armed forces of the United States or her Allies.

f) Details of meteorological conditions shall not be disclosed; only general discussion of weather conditions will be permitted.

Remember you endanger your life and the lives of all your friends aboard when you violate any of the above rules. Write often but take care what you write.

FROM THE SPONSOR

Bearing testimony to the interest which the home front has for the USS Matanikau are the following letters which were received from Mrs. Robert Grant, the sponsor of our ship, and her husband, Congressman Robert Grant, Third Indiana District, and a member of the House Naval Affairs Committee.

13 June 1944

Captain W. L. Erdmann, USN
USS Matanikau
Naval Station
Astoria, Oregon

Dear Captain Erdmann:

Please convey my greetings to all the officers and the men of the USS Matanikau. I'll be with you in my thoughts at the commissioning ceremonies, and my hopes and prayers go with you as you go to sea.

I wish for each and every one of your crew the best of good luck. Hit 'em hard and hurry home.

Sincerely Yours,

MRS. ROBERT A. GRANT.

13 June 1944

Captain W. L. Erdmann, USN
USS Matanikau
Naval Station
Astoria, Oregon

Dear Captain Erdmann:

Your kind letter of 5 June was most welcome. It was good news to read that a fellow Hoosier will be the skipper of the USS Matanikau, which Mrs. Grant had the privilege of sponsoring.

I would like to be present for the commissioning but that, of course, is out of the question. Since I cannot be there, will you please convey my kindest regards and my very best wishes to all the officers and men of the crew.

I wish for all of you a lot of happy hunting and a speedy and safe return.

May God's blessings be with all of you.

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT A. GRANT.

THE LAUNCHING

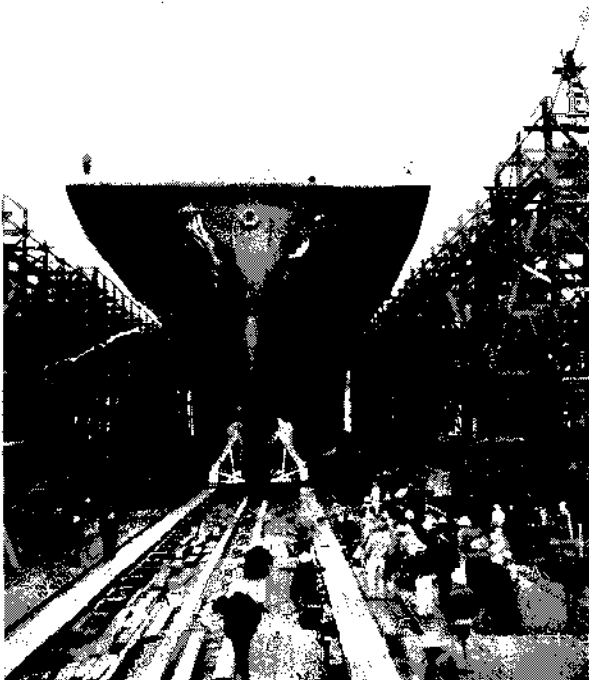
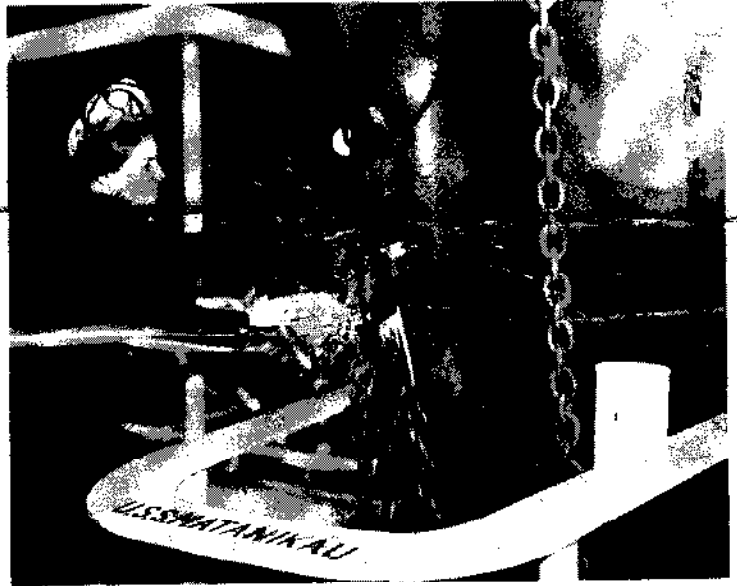


THE SPONSOR . . .

Mrs. Robert A. Grant with her husband, Congressman Robert A. Grant, member of the House Naval Affairs Committee.

THE BLOW . . .

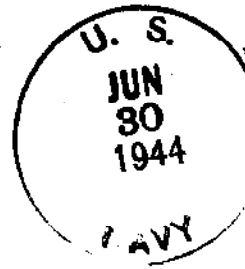
"Hit 'em hard and God bless you!"



THE SHIP . . .

Sliding down the building ways goes the USS Matanikau, 47th of the Kaiser built CVE's.

FROM:



Robert F. Daily Sr
X "Dining"
USS MATANIKAU (CVE-101)
FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



Mrs. Frank L. Daily
109 Landon Avenue
Ladysmith, Wisconsin

FOLD HERE

TO MAIL—FOLD AND SECURE HERE

