

USS SAGINAW BAY CVE-82



USS SAGINAW BAY (CVE-82)

A Bay of Kuiu Island, Alexander Archipelago, Alaska. (CVE- 82: dp, 7,800; l. 512'3"; b. 65'2"; ew. 108'1"; dr. 22'6"; s. 19 k; cpl. 860; r. 1 5", 16 40mm., ac. 28; cl. *Casablanca*; T. S4-S2-BB3)

Saginaw Bay (CVE 82) was laid down as MC hull 1119 on 1 November 1943 by the Kaiser Shipbuilding Co., Inc., Vancouver, Wash., launched on 19 January 1944; sponsored by Mrs. Howard L. Vickery; delivered to the Navy on 2 March 1944 at Astoria, Oreg.; and commissioned the same day, Capt. Frank C. Sutton in command.

Following shakedown off San Diego, *Saginaw Bay* loaded aircraft and their pilots for transport to Hawaii and departed on 15 April 1944. She reached Pearl Harbor on 21 April and exchanged her cargo for damaged planes and returned to Alameda, Calif. She conducted pilot qualifications off San Diego during May and early June and completed a second ferry mission to Pearl Harbor by 5 July.

Departing Pearl Harbor on 9 July, she proceeded to Eniwetok and Majuro atolls transporting aircraft. In August, she joined the expeditionary force forming in the Solomon Islands for the invasion of the Palaus and, as flagship of the escort carrier task force, provided air cover for the amphibious landings at Peleliu and Anguar. She then steamed for Seeadler Harbor, Manus, where she became flagship of a task force which sailed on 14 October to begin the liberation of the Philippine Islands with landings at Leyte. She joined the carrier group known as "Taffy 1", guarding the southeast entrance to Leyte Gulf. As the Japanese Fleet closed, on 24 October, she was ordered to transfer her aircraft to other carriers and proceed to Morotai for replacements. Thus she missed the Battle for Leyte Gulf. She rejoined her task unit on 28 October as it retired to Manus.

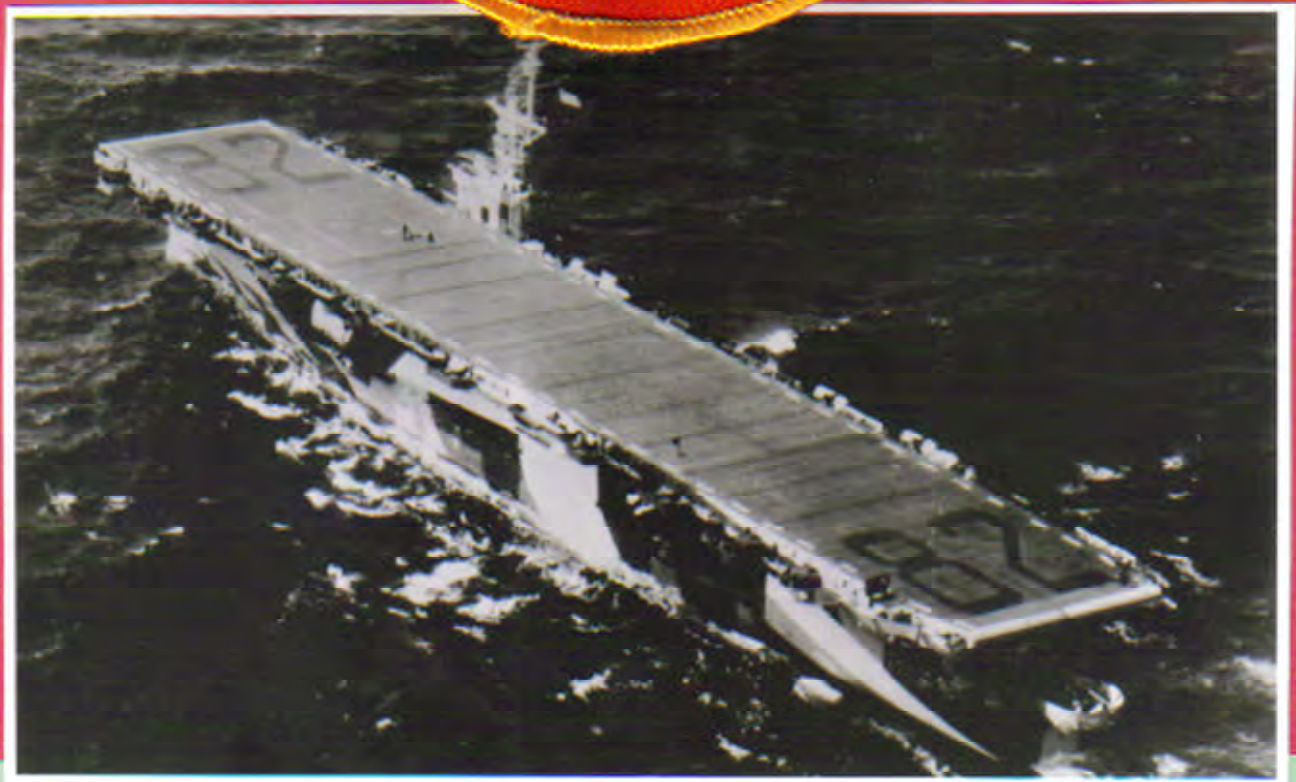
Saginaw Bay was anchored in Seeadler Harbor on 10 November when the ammunition ship *Mount Hood* (AE-29) was literally blown to pieces by an internal explosion. *Saginaw Bay* suffered minor damage to her exterior from the force of the blast and helped to care for men of various ships in the fleet base area who had been struck by debris from the disintegrated ship.

Saginaw Bay next participated in training for amphibious landing support missions in preparation for operations in Lingayen Gulf and supported the actual invasion from 2 through 21 January 1945. She then steamed to Ulithi for rehearsal of the Iwo Jima assault; covered the invasion force en route; provided support to the landings on 19 February; and supported operations on that bitterly contested island until 11 March.

Saginaw Bay next participated in the pre-invasion strikes against Okinawa which began on 25 March; continued her support through the invasion on 1 April; and then supported American forces ashore until she was ordered to the United States on 29 April.

The carrier arrived in San Diego on 22 May; underwent repairs; returned to Guam transporting aircraft in August; and was back in San Diego by 20 August. By the end of the month, she was engaged in training operations in the Hawaiian area until she reported for "Magic Carpet" duty, the return of combat veterans from the Pacific. She departed Hawaii on 14 September and called at Guiuan Roadstead, Samar, and San Pedro Bay, Leyte, in the Phillipines to embark veterans for return to San Francisco. She made a second "Magic Carpet" voyage to Buckner Bay, Okinawa, and back, before sailing on 1 February 1946 for the eastern seaboard. She entered the Boston Naval Shipyard on 23 February for inactivation; was decommissioned on 19 June 1946; and was assigned to the Boston Group of the U.S. Atlantic Reserve Fleet. She was reclassified CVHE-82, effective 12 June 1955 but was never converted. *Saginaw Bay* was struck from the Navy list on 1 March 1959 and was sold to Louis Simmons on 27 November 1959.

Saginaw Bay earned five battle stars for World War II service.



COMBAT RECORD for the USS SAGINAW BAY CVE - 82

The Saginaw Bay is proud of her contribution to the defeat of Japan. As a fighting unit of the fleet she took part in the historic operations of the Palau islands, Leyte Gulf, Lingayen Gulf, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa.

The sixteen Japanese flags painted on the Bridge indicate the number of Japanese planes shot down by the combined efforts of the Squadrons aboard and the ship's anti - - aircraft fire.

A further source of pride for the ship is the fact that in spite of the danger it constantly encountered not a man of the ship's company was killed or seriously injured.