



USS SALAMAUA CVE-96

United States Ship

U.S.S. SALAMUA (CVE-96)

Aguilla Bay (ACV-96) was reclassified CVE-96 on 15 July 1943; renamed Salamua on 6 November 1943; laid down under Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 1133) on 4 February 1944 by the Kaiser Shipbuilding Co. Vancouver, Wash; launched on 22 April 1944; sponsored by Mrs. W.J. Mullins; and commissioned on 26 May 1944, Capt. Joseph I. Taylor, Jr. in command.

Following shakedown off the west coast, Salamua transported planes and cargo from San Diego to Pearl Harbor, then returned to California, whence she conducted a similar run to Finschafen, New Guinea. On 1 September, she returned to Alameda; underwent overhaul; conducted training exercises; and on 16 October, again sailed west from San Diego. She arrived at Ulithi on 5 November, thence continued on to the Paulau and the Philippines. From the 14th to the 23d, she furnished air cover for convoys in the Leyte Gulf area; then proceeded to the Admiralties to stage for the invasion of Luzon. She departed Seeadler Harbor on 27 December and moved north. On 6 January 1945, she arrived off the entrance to Lingayen Gulf. Her planes began blasting enemy positions ashore and providing air cover for the approaching Allied ships. On the 9th, they provided air cover for the troops landing on the assault beaches; then continued that support until the 13th.

Just before 0900 on that day, a kamikaze carrying two 250 kg. bombs crashed Salamua's flight deck. Over eighty men were injured. Fifteen were killed. Damage was extensive. The flight deck, the hangar deck, and spaces below blazed with a multitude of fires. One of the bombs, failing to explode, punched through the starboard side at the waterline. Power, communications, and steering failed. One of her engine rooms flooded. The starboard engine quit. But by 0910, her gunners had splashed two of the kamikaz's compatriots. Temporary repairs enabled the CVE to return to San Francisco. Arriving on 26 February, repairs were quickly completed; and on 21 April, she moved west again. On 20 May, she arrived at Guam, whence she continued on to the Ryukyus where she joined other escort carriers on the 26th to support land operations on Okinawa. On 4 June, she joined a logistic support group; but, on the 5th, she was damaged by a typhoon. Repairs were made at Guam and, toward the end of July, she assumed antisubmarine patrol duty in the Marianas-Okinawa convoy lanes. In August she shifted to the Leyte-Okinawa lanes, where she remained until after the mid-month Japanese surrender.

On the 25th, Salamua returned to Leyte; replenished; then escorted a troop convoy to Tokyo Bay. The convoy arrived on 2 September, and the CVE's planes photographed the landing of the occupation troops at Yokohama the same day. After guarding a second convoy into Tokyo Bay, she joined the "Magic Carpet" fleet; embarked them at Alameda on 3 October. Before the end of the year, Salamua completed two more "Magic Carpet" runs then, with the new year, 1946 she prepared for inactivation. She was decommissioned on 9 May 1946; struck from the Navy list on the 21st; and subsequently sold to the Tidell Ship Dismantling Co. Portland Oreg. for scrapping on 18 November 1946.

Salamua earned three battle stars during World War II.