



Courtesy: Robert Schwemmer Maritime Library

USS *Bugara* (SS-331) being launched on July 2, 1944 at the Electric Boat Company in Groton, Connecticut.



Courtesy: Robert Schwemmer Maritime Library

An envelope, also referred to as a cover, commemorates the commissioning of USS *Bugara* on November 15, 1944.



Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command

USS *Bugara* was commissioned as a Balao-class submarine and received three battle stars for its service in World War II.



Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command

In 1951, USS *Bugara* received a Fleet Snorkel conversion. A new distinctive streamline sail was installed and the decks guns were removed.

## U.S. Navy Submarine USS *Bugara* (SS-331)

### Early History

U.S. Navy submarine *Bugara* (SS-331), was named for a saltwater fish species found off the coast of California. Its keel was laid down on October 21, 1943, at the Electric Boat Company in Groton, Connecticut. The Balao-class submarine was launched on July 2, 1944, sponsored by Mrs. Anna Perry, wife of Captain Lyman Perry, who served as aide to the Secretary of the Navy. Commissioned on November 15, 1944, Commander Arnold Schade served as the first commanding officer of USS *Bugara*. The submarine departed for the Pacific Ocean on December 25.

In February 1945, *Bugara* commenced war patrols in the Java, Flores and South China seas, and the Gulf of Siam. While in the Gulf of Siam, *Bugara* disrupted the junk trade on the Bangkok-Singapore route. It went on to destroy 12 junks, a Terengganu junk, 24 schooners, and 16 coasters, one naval auxiliary and three sea trucks with its deck gun, totaling 5,284 tons. Its sailors boarded all the vessels, with the exception of two, transporting the native crews to safety along with their personal belongings. *Bugara* later encountered Malay pirates attacking a Japanese schooner, manned by a Chinese crew that was en route to Singapore. As the submarine was approaching the scene, the pirates fled.

The Chinese crew was grateful to be rescued, having had two of their crewmen already killed by the pirates. The pirates were hunted down and destroyed, along with the Japanese schooner. When the war ended during its third patrol, *Bugara* was ordered to Fremantle, Australia, where the crew got a short period of leave. USS *Bugara* (SS-331) received three battle stars for its service in World War II and Commander Arnold Schade was awarded the Bronze Star medal.

### USS *Bugara* (SS-331) - World War II

**Nationality:** American

**Class:** Balao diesel-electric submarine

**Owner:** U.S. Navy

**Hull Material:** Steel

**Propulsion:** Four each General Motors Model 16-278A, V16 diesel engines driving electrical generators

**Displacement Tons:** 1,526 surface

**Displacement Tons:** 2,424 submerged

**Length:** 311-feet 9-inches

**Beam:** 27-feet 3-inches

**Draft:** 16-feet 10-inches

**Speed:** Knots 20.25 surface 8.75 submerged

**Cruising Range:** 11,000 miles

**Armament:** 10 21-inch torpedo tubes, six forward and four aft. A 5-inch 25 caliber gun, with a second gun installed on after deck in 1945. Bofors 40mm and Oerlikon 20mm cannons

**Complement:** Approximately 10 officers and 71 enlisted

**Test Depth:** 400 feet

### USS *Bugara* founders off Cape Flattery, Washington

On June 1, 1971, the U.S. Navy tug *Cree* (ATF-45) had the ex-USS *Bugara* under tow en route from the Naval Ammunition Depot at Bremerton, Washington, to a disposal site approximately 100 miles off of Cape Flattery. The submarine was to participate in a live-warhead evaluation of the Mark 48 torpedo as a target vessel. Off Cape Flattery, near the mouth of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the submarine began to take on water in the stern and started to settle lower into the Pacific Ocean. With USS *Cree* at risk of being pulled under, the steel hawser cable was cut. *Bugara* foundered shortly after. According to the *Oregonian*: "Lt. H. L. Matson of the Thirteenth Naval District said *Bugara* was believed to be resting on the bottom and posed no danger to navigation. No one was aboard the submarine when it went down. Three antisubmarine warfare destroyers, two minesweepers and antisubmarine warfare aircraft participated at different times during the week-long search. 'We know where it is - it's just a matter of time until we pinpoint it.'" That same month the U.S. Navy located *Bugara*, stating there would be no attempt to raise it.

## Post World War II

Following the war, USS *Bugara* spent time in Subic Bay in the Philippine Islands with other units of its squadron. In January 1946, it departed for San Diego, California, via Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Upon arrival, some of the crew was discharged from the navy while others were ordered to other duty in the Submarine Force. Returning to Pearl Harbor, on May 28, *Bugara* sank the ex-Japanese submarine I-174 with a Mark 10-3 exploder torpedo warhead.

After a routine overhaul at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, *Bugara* conducted a training mission in the Bering Sea and was involved in rescuing three crew members of a BSP army barge that was adrift. After a visit to Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon, the submarine returned to Pearl Harbor. In 1947, during an exercise with the USS *Bergall* (SS-320) and USS *Brill* (SS-330), they successfully made four mock attacks on the USS *Iowa* (BB-61). Over the next few years, *Bugara* was involved in training exercises off Hawaii, Midway Atoll, Guam, Australia, Okinawa, China, Japan, Samoa, and California.

In 1950, *Bugara* departed for the Far East to support United Nations Forces in the Korean Campaign. The stay was cut short while in Yokosuka, Japan, when a frigate rammed the submarine, requiring *Bugara* to return to Pearl Harbor for repairs. *Bugara* eventually returned to the Far East in January 1951.

## Fleet Snorkel Refit

*Bugara* returned to Pearl Harbor in June of 1951 for its fourth overhaul since it was launched in 1944. *Bugara* received a Fleet

Snorkel conversion, and recognized as a special class submarine. This was the first such conversion for the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. The conversion installed a distinctive streamline sail, and the deck guns were removed. The submarine also received air conditioning and electrical systems upgraded.

In 1953, *Bugara* was seriously damaged during a training mission when struck by the destroyer USS *Whitehurst* (DE-634) near Pearl Harbor. The impact caused the submarine to roll severely and enter into an uncontrolled descent. The crew managed to regain control of the downward plunge and surfaced the submarine. The sail and periscopes were damaged, and it took several weeks to repair.

For the next 10 years *Bugara* continued training throughout the Pacific. In April 1964, *Bugara* departed for WestPac and duty with the U.S. Seventh Fleet. It traveled to the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Japan rendering services in the Western Pacific. *Bugara* was the first American submarine to patrol the Gulf of Tonkin in Vietnam after the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed by the U.S. Congress. The resolution resulted in significant escalation of U.S. activities in the Vietnam War. Commemorating *Bugara's* 21<sup>st</sup> birthday on November 15, 1965, the submarine made its 6000<sup>th</sup> dive. In June 1969, *Bugara* was reclassified as (AGSS-331), no longer a combat submarine, but three months later was reclassified back to (SS-331). That same year the submarine made its 7000<sup>th</sup> dive. On October 1, 1970, USS *Bugara* was decommissioned at Mare Island, California.

## Ex-USS *Bugara* Rediscovery

In 2001, during a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) fiber optic cable survey, the ex-USS *Bugara* wreck site was confirmed. A 45-minute non-archeological reconnaissance inspection of the exterior hull was conducted. The survey results will be compared to the E/V *Nautilus* ROV survey planned for 2017, comparing possible changes in the hull over a 16-year span.

## E/V *Nautilus* ROV Survey 2017

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries has teamed up with Ocean Exploration Trust to explore marine ecosystems along the West Coast from Canada to the Mexico. Working aboard the Exploration Vessel (E/V) *Nautilus*, scientists are mapping and exploring targets, including those found in Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. The first archaeological survey of the USS *Bugara* will be conducted on August 25 and will include scientists, archaeologists, historians, educators, and subject matter experts from across the nation via satellite. The survey dive will be livestreamed through [nautiluslive.org](http://nautiluslive.org).

## Site Management and Protection

The U.S. Navy has retained title and ownership of the ex-USS *Bugara* and provides protection under the Sunken Military Craft Act. USS *Bugara* is located inside Washington state waters and within the federally protected waters of NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Washington state and the National Marine Sanctuaries Act extends protection for the archaeological remains of the wreck site.



Photo Courtesy: NavSource and Richard Leonhardt

Crew members aboard USS *Bugara* in Subic Bay, Philippines, in 1966. Photo taken from the destroyer USS *Fred T. Berry* (DD-858).

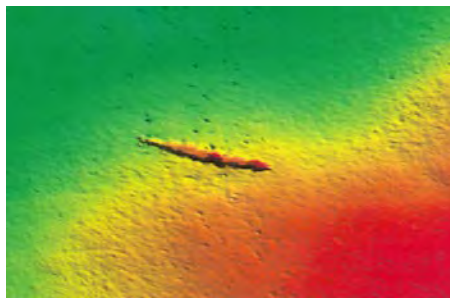


Photo: NOAA R/V *Okeanos Explorer*

A multibeam sonar survey of the USS *Bugara* was conducted by the NOAA ship *Okeanos Explorer* in 2008 off Cape Flattery, Washington.



Photo: Robert V. Schwemmer/NOAA

The remotely operated vehicle (ROV) *Hercules* will be deployed from the E/V *Nautilus* to conduct the first archaeological survey of USS *Bugara*.