

TIN CAN'S TALE

SAGA OF USS HARADEN — A FLETCHER-CLASS DESTROYER AT WAR
BY GREG SWEATT

The second USS *Haraden* (DD-585) was launched by the Boston Navy Yard in Massachusetts on 19 March 1943. The new destroyer was sponsored by Caroline E. Derby, the great-great grandniece of Capt. Jonathan Haraden. The USS *Haraden* was commissioned at Boston on 16 September 1943 and Cmdr. H.C. Allen Jr. was her first captain. She was manned by a crew of 273 officers and men.

The USS *Haraden* belonged to the *Fletcher*-class of destroyers (hull

numbers 445 to 804). These were the heavyweight champions of the Navy's destroyer forces during the toughest years of World War II. The *Fletcher*-class originated from a design submitted to the Naval Board in January 1940 and approved by the Secretary of the Navy on 27 January 1940. This original design called for speeds up to 38 knots. She was to be armed with torpedoes, 5-inch guns (in five turrets), one quadruple 1.1-inch anti-aircraft gun mount, 28 depth charges, and four .50-caliber

machine guns. Once the design was approved, orders for some 24 ships were placed, and by the end of 1940 this number was increased to 100. With the American entry into the war, additional orders were placed, bringing up the total to 175 destroyers.

During late 1941 and early 1942, orders were issued to revise the ship's anti-aircraft armament (the quickly-progressing naval war showed how vital anti-aircraft protection was for surface vessels). The 1.1-inch weapons were replaced with one

twin 40mm Bofors mount while the .50-caliber guns were replaced with single 20mm Orlikon cannons. Over time, the number of twin 40mm guns was increased to a total of five mounts — two forward, two amidships, and a single twin mount between the number three and four 5-inch guns. The *Haraden* carried such a 40mm arrangement. Throughout the war, *Fletcher*-class destroyers were modified and changed to meet the needs of the constantly changing conflict.

The *Haraden* carried five 5-inch/38 caliber dual purpose guns, ten 21-inch torpedo tubes, five 40mm Bofors anti-aircraft twin mounts, seven 20mm Orlikon anti-aircraft single mounts, six depth charge projector (three starboard, three portside), and two depth charge stern tracks. When she was commissioned in 1943, she wore overall Measure 21 Navy Blue camouflage paint. This camouflage was highly effective against aircraft.

Due to its powerful engines, the *Haraden* (and other *Fletcher*-class de-

stroyers) tended to "squat" in the water, stern down, when accelerating or steaming at high speeds. There were also some steering problems. In common with previous destroyers, the *Fletchers* had only a single rudder. Due to their great length, they had a very large turning radius, so much so that only the introduction of twin rudders in subsequent class destroyers appear to offer a solution. Thus, in wartime, *Fletchers* were notorious for turning

outside *Iowa*-class battleships. After the war, an enlarged single rudder was developed to cure this problem and all *Fletchers* reactivated for Korea were fitted with the unit. The *Haraden* departed Boston on 9 October 1943 for shakedown training off Bermuda and after completion

of that task, she joined the carrier USS *Intrepid* (CV-11) at Boston on 30 November 1943 for the voyage to the Pacific. She transited the Panama Canal and arrived in San Diego, California, on 21 December to join R/Adm. J.B. Oldendorf's Northern Support Group for the epic invasion of



During WWII, Boston was turned into a very large complex for the US Navy.



Burning after the kamikaze attack in Sulu Bay on 13 December 1944, USS *Haraden* is still in the water as her crew undertakes damage control. In the background, USS *Twiggs* is pulling in to help fight fires and offer assistance. At this point in its service life, *Haraden* is painted in Camouflage Measure 32, Design D.