United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

War in the Pacific Ship Study
Federal Agency Nomination

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic
USS Torsk (SS-423)

2. Location

street & number
Pier IV Pratt Street

city, town
Baltimore

state
Maryland

3. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Present Use</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>in process</td>
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<tr>
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<td>X in process</td>
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<td>X museum</td>
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4. Owner of Property

name
Baltimore Maritime Museum

street & number
Pier IV Pratt Street

city, town
Baltimore

state
Maryland

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.
Department of the Navy

street & number
Naval Sea Systems Command

city, town
Washington

state
DC

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title
None

has this property been determined eligible?

yes

no

date

depository for survey records

state
7. Description

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<td>___ unaltered</td>
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<tr>
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<td>___ ruins</td>
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<tr>
<td>___ fair</td>
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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

USS Torsk (SS-423) was built by the U.S. Navy at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. She was launched on September 6, 1944, and was placed in commission on December 16, 1944.

USS Torsk is a fleet-type submarine of the Tench class. The Tench class were virtual copies of the Gato and Balao classes; however, they were more strongly built than the Gato/Balao classes and had a better internal layout, which increased their displacement by about 35-40 tons. The deck of the boat is made of teakwood, and the exterior is painted black.

Specific ship data concerning USS Torsk is:

- Length: 311 feet
- Displacement: 1,800 tons surface / 2,500 tons submerged
- Beam: 27 feet
- Draft: 17 feet
- Speed: 20 knots surface / 9 knots submerged
- Design Depth: 400 feet
- Crew: 8 Officers 74 Enlisted
- Armament: Ten torpedo tubes, 6 forward and 4 aft, with 14 reloads, total 24 torpedos, various combinations of antiaircraft guns

USS Torsk was a pre-snorkel submarine operating underwater on batteries, and powered by a diesel electric system. In 1951 USS Torsk was converted to a snorkel-equipped Guppy submarine that allowed the boat to operate her diesel engines underwater. During this conversion all the boat's exterior guns were removed and the conning tower was enclosed by a new sail casing designed to reduce underwater water resistance.

USS Torsk is in good condition, and aside from the addition of the snorkel and the exterior changes, retains much of her World War II integrity.
8. Significance

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<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
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Specific dates 1944-1945 Builder Architect Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

In the conflict against Japan in World War II, the role and importance of the submarine forces of the United States cannot be overestimated. American submarines sank more than 600,000 tons of enemy warships and more than 5,000,000 tons of merchant shipping, thus destroying much of Japan's ocean commerce. This was accomplished by a force that never numbered more than two percent of naval personnel engaged in the war. The American submarine war against Japan created a blockade that denied her the oil, iron ore, food, and other raw materials she needed to continue to fight. By 1945 this submarine war made it all but impossible for Japanese ships to sail the ocean. Without this commerce and the raw materials it supplied to her war effort, Japan found it impossible to continue the war outside of the homeland.¹

USS Torsk represents U.S. Submarine forces that fought against Japan in World War II for the following reasons:

1. USS Torsk is a World War II Tench class submarine. The Tench class was a late World War II submarine design that represented the continued attempt by the U.S. Navy to improve on the previously successful Gato/Balao classes. Only ten Tench class submarines, including USS Torsk, were commissioned in time to see service in the Pacific during World War II.

2. USS Torsk conducted two war patrols and sank 3 Japanese ships totaling 2,473 tons. USS Torsk was awarded two battle stars for her World War II service.

3. USS Torsk is credited with firing the last torpedoes and sinking the last Japanese combatant ships of World War II, when on August 14, 1945, she sank the Japanese Coast Defense Vessel No. 13 and Coast Defense Vessel No. 47. With the sinking of these two vessels the U.S. Navy completed its mission, begun on December 7, 1941, to sweep the oceans of Japanese merchant shipping and warships.

4. USS Torsk is in good condition and, although altered as a Guppy submarine, retains much of her World War II integrity.
FOOTNOTES


BIBLIOGRAPHY


Tench Class Fleet Submarine—USS TORSK (SS423)

**Maneuvering Room**
Here was where the main propulsion system was controlled. Emergency control stations were in the forward end of the compartment, in pilot tunnels on either side of the main access corridor, and in the main access corridor itself.

**After Torpedo Room**
This compartment housed two diesel generator sets, one on each side. The spaces were divided into upper and lower levels, since the main engine occupied all of the vertical space. The upper level contained the auxiliary diesel generators, fuel oil and lubricating oil pumps, and an engine room service trunk. The lower level contained the auxiliary diesel generators, fuel oil and lubricating oil pumps, and an engine room service trunk.

**Topdals**
The main deck is teakwood. The spaces are divided into upper and lower levels, since the main engine occupied all of the vertical space. The upper level contained the auxiliary diesel generators, fuel oil and lubricating oil pumps, and an engine room service trunk.

**Forward Engine Room**
This compartment housed two diesel generator sets, one on each side. The spaces were divided into upper and lower levels, since the main engine occupied all of the vertical space. The upper level contained the auxiliary diesel generators, fuel oil and lubricating oil pumps, and an engine room service trunk.

**After Battery Compartment**
A ladder at the after end of the compartment led to the top deck. The upper level contained the galley, crew's mess and staterooms for officers. The lower level contained the galley, crew's mess and staterooms for officers. The lower level also contained the galley, crew's mess and staterooms for officers. The lower level also contained the galley, crew's mess and staterooms for officers.

**Forward Battery Compartment**
A sub-base in the forward portion of the compartment led to the top deck. The upper level contained the galley, crew's mess and staterooms for officers. The lower level contained the galley, crew's mess and staterooms for officers.

**Forward Torpedo Room**
This compartment contained the main propulsion system. The main access corridor, on the port side, had one large horizontal access trunk. The access trunk was divided into two main sections, one for the main engine and one for the auxiliary diesel generator. The main engine was located in the forward portion of the compartment, on the port side. The auxiliary diesel generator was located in the after portion of the compartment, on the starboard side.

**Central Room**
The upper level contained the control room, the reloading station, the turntable, and the turntable access. The lower level contained the turntable and the turntable access. The upper level also contained the control room, the reloading station, and the turntable access.
9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property  N/A

Quadrangle name  Baltimore East

UTM References

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Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

N/A

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title  Harry A. Butowsky

organization  National Park Service
date  May 1985

street & number  Division of History
telephone  (202) 343-8168

city or town  Washington
state  DC 20013-7127

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

   national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:
date

Chief of Registration
1. USS Torsk
2. Baltimore, Maryland
3. Baltimore Maritime Museum
4. 1985
5. Baltimore Maritime Museum
6. Exterior Sail
7. Photo #2
1. USS Torsk
2. Baltimore, Maryland
3. Baltimore Maritime Museum
4. 1985
5. Baltimore Maritime Museum
6. Crew's Mess
7. Photo #4
1. USS Torsk
2. Baltimore, Maryland
3. Baltimore Maritime Museum
4. 1985
5. Baltimore Maritime Museum
6. Radio Shack
7. Photo #3