

## Foreword by Melville Owen

The history recounted in this book is little known outside the families of the boat owners whose vessels were requisitioned by the government in the very early days of World War II. Our family's experience started well before Pearl Harbor and continued well past the delivery of our 50-foot cabin cruiser *Pat Pending* to the United States Navy at Treasure Island on San Francisco Bay on 9 December 1941.

In early 1941, the Navy realized that its shortage of patrol boats would require the acquisition and conversion of civilian boats to military use. Boats of all sizes, from 40-foot pleasure craft to 80-foot fishing vessels to 150-foot yachts, would be needed to fill the void. In fact, the Navy "requested" some of these boats as early as the summer of 1941. I recall that we were asked to sell *Pat Pending* that summer. As we were using the boat every weekend, and there was no emergency, we declined.

However, everything changed on 7 December when we learned of the attack. By 10 a.m. the next morning, the Navy was calling and ordering the delivery of *Pat Pending* by noon on Tuesday, 9 December, for military duty. Clearly, the Navy had been preparing lists of qualified boats, their owners and contact information, knowing that these boats would be needed in a hurry.

A number of other boat owners at the Oakland Yacht Club received the same call and by Monday night, all the owners were at the yacht club removing their personal equipment and supplies. I recall some of the owners, in an effort to avoid the need to carry their liquor home, drank as much as possible.

Once the Navy had the boats, it was grey paint on all outside surfaces and an ugly green on the interior. The government then sent a team of appraisers to set the price to be paid for the requisitioned boats. In our case, we received a check for \$7,000 on 7 April 1942. That was close to what we had paid for *Pat Pending* when we acquired it in October 1940. I recall that there was an appeal process for those that felt they did not receive a fair price.

*Pat Pending* was assigned to the Tiburon Net Boom Depot, outfitted with a depth charge cage on the middle deck, and a deck gun on the bow. Her duty was to patrol the newly installed submarine cable net across the entrance to San Francisco Bay. The boat was on station twenty-four hours a day, with the refueling and changing of crew handled from a 146-foot navy tug called the *Eider*. She and a sister ship, the *Dreadnought*, were stationed at each end of a 1000-yard log boom that was pulled open and shut to allow our ships to enter and exit port. By late 1943 the Navy had built enough patrol boats to retire *Pat Pending* and similar boats. They were put "on the dry" (beached) in Alameda to await disposal. At that time the law required auctioning of all military surplus. My father was concerned that this regulation might mean that we would not have *Pat Pending* back in the family. He also felt that it was unfair to the former owners not to have the first chance to buy back their boats. To cure the problem, Dad asked his congressman to introduce a bill requiring that these requisitioned boats be offered to the former owners before any auction was held. *Pat Pending* was the

first boat returned under Public Law 305 of 1944. We offered \$10, but the War Administration in charge of sales countered at \$100, which we paid.

By summer of 1945, nine months and \$24,000 later, *Pat Pending* was better than new. In the sixty-six years since that time, we have made improvements and completed a major rebuild in 2000, thus ensuring that *Pat Pending* will continue to enjoy civilian life on San Francisco Bay for many years to come.

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## Foreword by August Felando

While managing the affairs of the American Tunaboat Association (ATA) in San Diego between October 1960 and September 1991, I had numerous conversations with men who had served aboard the tuna clippers that were converted to U.S. Navy YPs during World War II. Most of these talks concerned the movement of the Tuna YPs from San Diego to the Canal Zone for picket duty off the Panama Canal Zone during the months of February and March 1942; the activities of Tuna YPs in waters off Hawaii, Samoa, and Midway Island between April and July 1942; the trips of Tuna YPs in the Solomon Islands (Tulagi, Guadalcanal, and Bougainville) during the critical months of mid-1942 and 1943; and the loss of Tuna YPs during a typhoon off Okinawa in October 1945.

On business trips for the ATA, I visited Guadalcanal, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, Western Samoa, American Samoa, New Zealand, Australia, Guam, and Saipan. In Honiara, Guadalcanal, I examined papers and obtained maps relative to the war on Guadalcanal, and then took a brief fly-over of Tulagi Island. Armed with the maps of Tulagi and Guadalcanal that I had secured in Honiara, I talked with Edward and Joe Madruga about their memories of operating *YP-289* (ex-*PARAMOUNT*). During trips to Noumea, New Caledonia, I became familiar with the unique anchorage aspects in the port of Noumea, as well as the aged facilities once used by those in command of our military during WW II. These visits increased my understanding of the Pacific-wide distribution of Tuna YPs, but also made me curious as to why so few people, even within the U.S. Tuna Industry, were familiar with the role of Tuna Clipper YPs during WW II. Necessarily, I started to ask my friends at the ATA more about the Tuna Clipper YPs.

My search included visits to the Navy Department Library, part of the Naval History and Heritage Command at the Washington Navy Yard, during my many business trips to Washington, D.C. I was surprised by this facility's limited collection of data and photos relating to the commercial fishing vessels converted to YPs during WW II. Much work remains to be done to complete the story. David Bruhn's work is an excellent example of what can be accomplished.

The first high seas tuna clipper was built by Japanese immigrants in San Pedro, California, during 1924. It was equipped with a diesel marine engine, a machine that was relatively new to the U.S.

commercial fishing industry. *PATRICIA I* made history when it became the first vessel to fish successfully for tuna off Baja California and then return its refrigerated catch directly to tuna canners located in Southern California. This round trip capability was unique. Prior to this historic event, the small tuna boats transferred their catch to tuna tenders or tuna mother-ships in near shore waters. The larger vessels then would deliver the catch to the tuna canners located in the ports of San Pedro or San Diego. Stimulated by the success of the *PATRICIA I* and other similar tuna baitboats, a new-style tuna vessel was developed in Southern California. This new construction was rapid, fundamental, and driven by fishermen, shipyards, canners, and diesel engine manufacturers. By 1929, U.S. flag tuna clippers were fishing in waters off Cocos Islands, Costa Rica, and off Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. By the end of 1930, fishing at Galapagos Islands had become routine. Significantly, the construction of tuna clippers with new cap capabilities to make fishing voyages, lasting months, to distant places in the eastern Tropical Pacific started again in the mid-1930s. In San Diego, navy officials carefully observed this development, particularly noting the size of the diesel engines, the methods and equipment used to refrigerate the tuna, and the navigational and seagoing skills of the men aboard the tuna clippers. They were aware that the areas where U.S. tuna clippers operated were seasonally affected by tropical storms and hurricanes. They learned that the fishermen exercised difficult seamanship skills when taking live bait in shallow areas along the coasts and islands, or when searching for new tuna fishing grounds.

After the Japanese naval attack at Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Navy searched for American commercial fishing vessels capable of operating on the high seas, and ordered tuna clippers to leave their fishing grounds and make port at the Panama Canal Zone or at ports in Southern California. Later, the U.S. Navy made the wise decision to ask the tuna fishermen to serve on the tuna clippers that were being converted to military service. Hundreds of fishermen agreed. Fifty-two tuna clippers were acquired by the military, almost all converted for service as YPs. Twenty-one of these vessels did not return home to the U.S. tuna industry after the war because of ordered destruction, sinking, foundering, or the effects of battle engagements.

The number of tuna fishermen who died in the service of this YP fleet is currently unknown. We know that *YP-345* (ex-*YANKEE*) was lost with all hands in waters southeast of Midway Island. The U.S. tuna industry is proud that the United States Marine Corps awarded the Presidential Unit Citation to the following three former tuna clippers: *YP-239* (ex-*CHALLENGER*), *YP-284* (ex-*ENDEAVOR*), and *YP-346* (ex-*PROSPECT*), and that Battle Stars were awarded to the following five tuna clippers: *YP-236* (ex-*EUROPA*), *YP-284* (ex-*ENDEAVOR*), *YP-514* (ex-*AMERICAN BEAUTY*), *YP-516* (ex-*QUEEN AMELIA*), and *YP-517* (ex-*ST. ANN*).

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