

Foreword

In *Nightraiders: U.S. Navy, Royal Navy, Royal Australian Navy, and Royal Netherlands Navy Mine Forces Battling the Japanese in the Pacific in World War II*, Commander David D. Bruhn, USN (Ret.) has authored a comprehensive volume on the vital contribution to victory of Allied mine warriors and their offensive and defensive minelaying forces. Bruhn's focus is clearly on the efforts of U.S., British, Australian, and Dutch surface minelayers whose actions, he argues, have been "largely consigned to the dustbins of history." He demonstrates convincingly that these forces denied the enemy merchant ships safe ports and seaways and compelled them to operate farther offshore where they became prey to Allied aircraft and submarines. Throughout much of 1943 and 1944, U.S. surface ships laid close to 3,000 moored-contact and magnetic-ground mines in fields throughout the operational theaters. At the same time, Bruhn does not slight the work of the Allied air forces, including U.S. B-29 bombers that dropped by far the greatest number of mines in the war and sank the most enemy combatants and merchant ships, especially during the last six months of the war.

Nightraiders is a worthy follow-on to the author's *Wooden Ships and Iron Men* trilogy that covers mine warfare during the Korean War and the Vietnam War; and *Home Waters* which, like this book, he co-authored with Rob Hoole. *Home Waters* focuses on the German submarine offensive of WWI, which failed to bring Britain to her knees, in large part because of the efforts of the British, Canadian, and U.S. Navy mine warfare communities to deny the U-Boats unrestricted access to Allied home waters and greater devastation of shipping. Indeed, these works and *Nightraiders* provide anyone interested in the topic with a storehouse of critical information and analysis of mine warfare during the momentous 20th century.

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