

SHIPWRECKS OF TRUK LAGOON

BY PETER COLLINGS

INTERNATIONAL AWARD WINNING AUTHOR,
PHOTOGRAPHER & WRECK HUNTER

FORWARD BY JOHN WOMACK



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SHIPWRECKS

OF

TRUK LAGOON

BY PETER COLLINGS



FORWARD by JOHN WOMACK

I am John Womack Snr, BSAC First Class Diver, Advanced Instructor & owner of Otter Drysuits in Yorkshire, having dived the Britannic, Prince of Wales, Repulse and the Victoria plus many more over the last 40 years I would not go anywhere in the Red Sea without one of Peter's guide books. I have been on numerous successful trips of Peter's including wreck searching in Truk Lagoon.

Peter's new book is awesome, there are so many wrecks and to give detailed descriptions of all the wrecks themselves is great, it makes you feel like you have dived them already. I remember doing a night dive on the Thistle which was just fantastic it was pitch black with pin points of light from fellow divers lights. In the south, Peter, Tom and myself went looking for the wreck of the Maidan on Rocky Island, we followed the debris trail down to 65mtrs and there before us was the huge shadow of the wreck hanging over the abyss starting at 80 mtrs. We could only look down in wonder, but we had found what we were looking for after 10 years.

Peter's trips are a must and very much like his trips his books are a must read, Peter is a walking encyclopaedia on all things diving and ship wrecks. A lot of great ships were made in the North East and it comes as no surprise to me that this is where Peter came from too, we have been friends/fellow wreck divers a lot of years and hope to be sharing experiences and books for many more years to come.



John Womack

MD Otter Watersports

Yorkshire.March 2018

[Otter Drysuits, UK](#)

This series of guides is respectfully dedicated to this great man. I am proud to have called him friend and shared his last dive. JOHN MICHAEL WOMACK 23 MARCH 1943- 30TH NOV.2018

FRONT COVER Richard emerges from the engine room of the NIPPO MARU, during a combined photo shoot and advanced wreck diving course, logging 16 60 mtrs+ dives in 17 days. Some helium bill!

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Introduction

The legacy of Truk Lagoon was born out of warfare, from a period of bloody history surpassing all before. Today in stark contrast, an entire fleet which aided that destruction, lies silently on the bottom of the lagoon. After almost seventy years these vessels remain a museum to that conflict but have been reborn, brought back to life by Mother Nature.

I first visited these wrecks back in the early 80's, about the same time as my adventures began in Egypt. But these wrecks are a beacon to the rest of the world in terms of conservation. In those thirty-five years I have seen little change in the Truk wrecks, save some damage caused by livaboard vessels. Indeed the coral and fish life seems to get better as time goes on. Those responsible in Egypt should take note!

The wrecks are all very well documented and this publication is a mere introduction to the wrecks and is intended as an introduction for those thinking of visiting Truk. I have selected a handful of my favourites after 12 visits! That list is growing!

Masterful works by Roy Smallpage, Klauss Lindemann and Dan. E. Bailey are all highly recommended. I could not complete this work without paying homage to the father of wreck diving in Truk, Kimiuro Aisek, who I had the great privilege to meet on several occasions. At the age of seventeen, Kimiuro witnessed the events of Feb 17th & 18th 1944, and later went on to establish the Blue Lagoon Dive centre. He died January 4th 2001.

Many of the vessels featured in this publication are of Japanese origin, the letters IJN preceding the ships name refer to a naval vessel (Imperial Japanese Navy). Merchant ships are designated with the word MARU after their name. Maru roughly translated means "to go around". In the case of an "auxiliary naval" vessel, such as a fleet oiler the correct designate would be IJN and not Maru. Most Japanese vessels had their name embossed in both English as well as Japanese characters, due to international shipping procedures and canal transfers. M.V. relates to diesel powered vessels outwith the fleet.



It goes without saying that this location is regarded by most experts as the best wreck diving in the world. As such the wrecks have been expertly identified and documented in two superb books;

“Hailstorm Over Truk” by Klauss Ilferman, “WW2 Wrecks of Truk Lagoon” by Dan E Bailey

I cannot praise these books enough, neither leave any stone unturned. Another excellent publication is by Roy Smallpage and is perhaps more user friendly when visiting the wrecks All three should grace the wreck divers bookshelves!

The wrecks offer diving for all levels, water temperature at 29/30 degrees, 100ft visibility and no currents, not only is it a hallowed location but a perfect classroom for those wishing to improve their wreck diving skills. Over the eight expeditions so far we have averaged some 30 x 70 minute dives, each over our nine day stay.

While I would always recommend livaboard diving. Truk is a different story. Currently the livaboards offer six days unlimited diving, that is five dives a day. A tough relentless schedule and more expensive! We have observed these floating hotels anchored up and using their skiffs in the same way as hotel based operations. Choose wisely.

E BOOK CONCEPT

The idea of the E BOOK series came about after seeing so many incorrect publications quoting the wrong identity of the Tile Wreck at Abu Nuhas in the Red Sea. Despite a plethora of undeniable facts presented by myself and members of the Red Sea Wreck Academy, self-proclaiming experts still, for reasons known only to themselves, continued to quote the MARCUS as the CHRISOULA K. It was archive photographs from Howard Rosenstien and the location of the ships bell, which added weight to Stephan Jablonski’s accounts of the sinkings’. This new material gave us enough to produce the first E book in 2008.

Being free from restrictions it soon found its way around the world and was passed on from diver to diver. It had the desired effect-Now more and more reports carry the correct identity.

Its success lead to more titles being produced and published .Initially with an Egyptian theme, the Thistlegorm, Rosalie Moller and the Russian warranted a volume to themselves. Tourist authorities have noticed the importance of their assets. Wrecks are living underwater museums, and commissions have flooded in from Leros, Egypt, Truk, Palau, Sri Lanka Subic Bay, and Busuanga, to name but a few.

Promoting tourism through shipwrecks” has become our mission statement, and by the end of 2015 we will have completed 20 titles in the series. We intend to update the guides annually-all free in readable format (72dpi) and in hi res, printable versions from the deeplens website for a small fee. So now we have a total of 20 titles available, (and more on the way), yours to enjoy and pass on-to anyone who may be interested- with my compliments and don’t forget we run regular expeditions and safaris to all these featured Wrecks...The project has only just begun....

PETER COLLINGS SSI PRO 5000

Kimiuo Aisek



Kimiuro Aisek witnessed Operation Hail-stone, the American attack on the Japanese Imperial Navy's Fourth Fleet at Truk Lagoon in 1944. He was only 17 years old, but was old enough to know that life would change forever. Kimiuro was a walking history of the battle and had a photographic memory of the Lagoon at the time of the attack. By the mid-1970s he had been diving in the lagoon for years, located many of the wrecks and had brought diving to Truk. His fame as a Dive-master was common knowledge.

Born in Truk under Japanese rule in 1927, Kimiuro's compassion for Japanese navy and army men during the war years later led him to revere the underwater graveyards and the souls entombed within the sunken ships. Hundreds of visiting divers revelled in hearing Kimiuro "talk story" about Operation Hailstone.

His hospitality and caring nature endeared him to strangers who felt they were not just tourists, they had become a part of his extended family. Despite hosting the diving world's greatest celebrities, Kimiuro always remained a humble man.

When Kimiuro died in 2001 at the age of 73, he left a diving legacy unmatched anywhere else in the world.



Gradvin Aisek with the bell from the Rio De Janero Maru.

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THE MEMORIAL MUSEUM



Opened in honour of Kimiuo in 2014, the Memorial Museum is located within the ground of the Blue Lagoon Complex between the dive centre and the hotel. Inside is a remarkable and unique display of artefacts recovered from the shipwrecks. Many have been fully restored while others remain in their preserved state. From bells to bottles the museum is crammed with items of great interest to the historian and visiting diver. Maps and models are also on display providing the visitor with a detailed insight into the amazing underwater museums which once floated on the surface of the lagoon.



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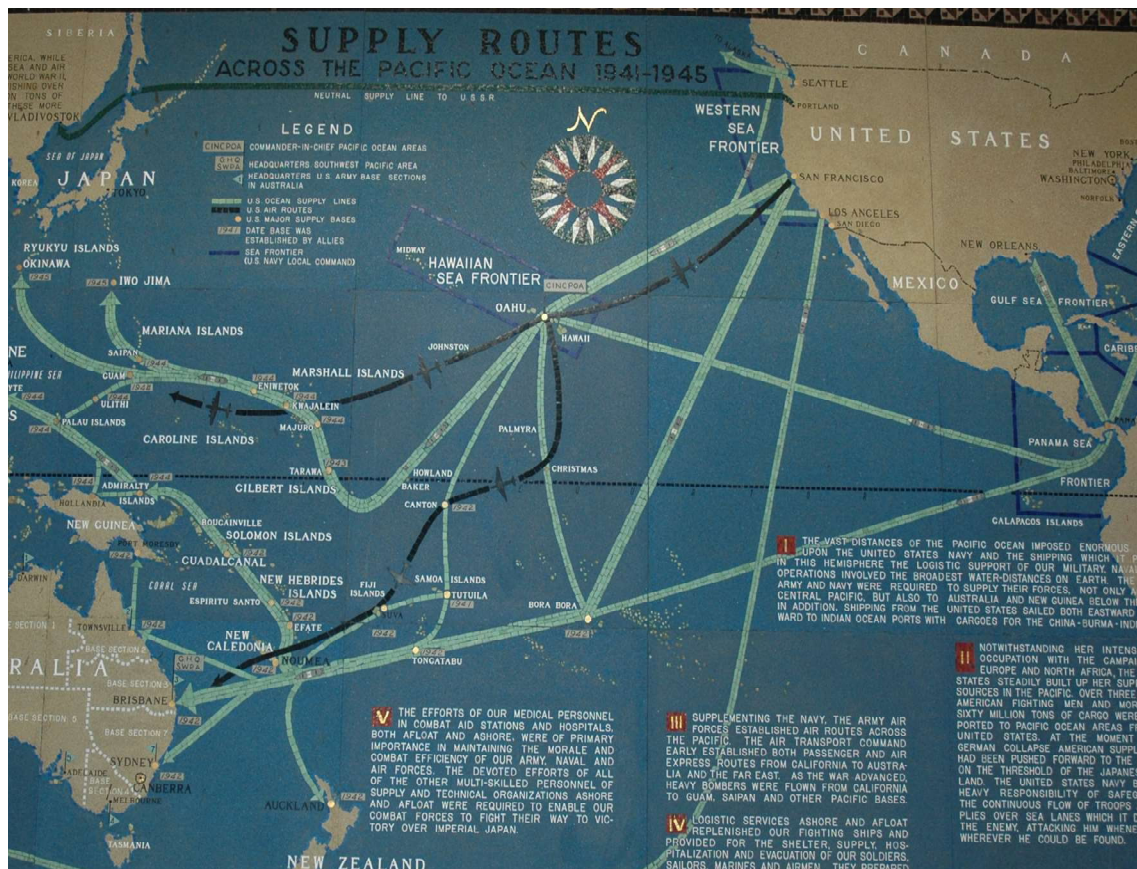
OPERATION HAILSTONE

The Japanese had for many years prepared Truk Lagoon as a forward naval base. A huge natural harbour and deep anchorage strategically placed in the heart of the trade routes. They had established air fields and anti-aircraft defences, but it was their belief in the impenetrable air umbrella of the Zero fighter which was to be the inevitable downfall of the base.

Task Force 58 comprised mainly of the carriers Yorktown, Enterprise, Cabot, Essex, Lexington and Bunker Hill, plus the battleships Iowa and New Jersey. The Americans had hoped to catch the capital ships including the Battleships Yamato and Musashi, but their high level reconnaissance planes were spotted tipping the Japanese off and the major capital ships had left before the first airstrikes arrived.

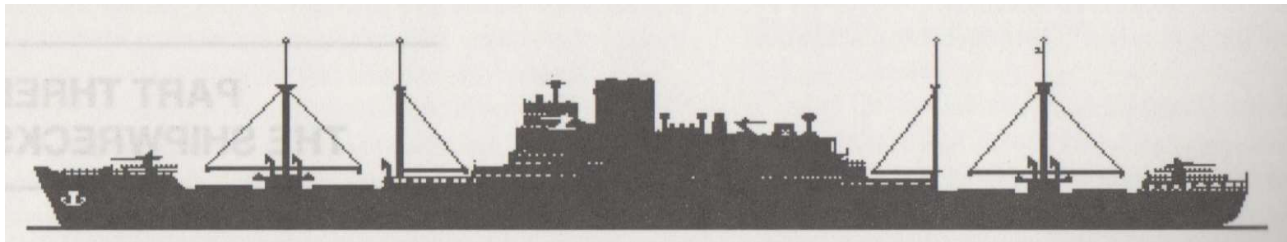
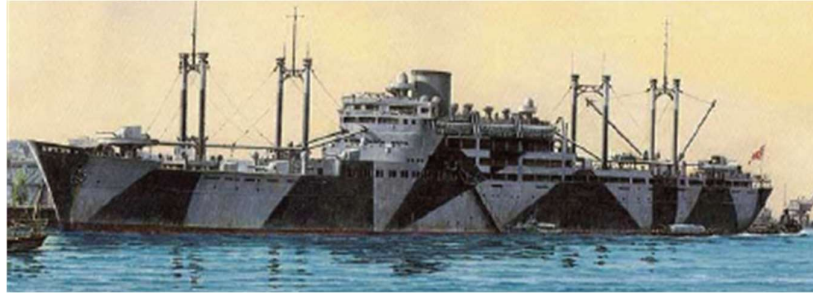
17th, 18th Feb 1944. The first waves of the attack were to take out the air cover and the new American fighters, Grumman Hellcats, were more than a match for the Zeros. Given that some of the Japanese pilots were on different islands to their planes, the merchant fleet was at the mercy of the torpedo and dive bombers which followed.

The results of these and subsequent attacks have left the diving world an amazing legacy.



Map depicting the strategic importance of Truk and Palau. This is one of many mosaics depicting the Pacific campaign during the Second World War which adorn the walls of the monoliths in the American Military Museum in Manila.

IJN AIKOKO



Passenger cargo ship/ armed merchantman, 10,438 tons 492 ft long. Built in 1939 at Tama Zosensho shipyard in Tamano. Although only half a wreck this is one of the most spectacular wrecks in Truk. It is also one of the most challenging. The entire fore section of the wreck is missing, by that I mean totally gone, without a trace, vapourised. This is a result of the 500lb bombs dropped by Douglas Dauntless And Grumman Avenger aircraft from Intrepid striking the forward hold containing munitions, mines and bombs. In contrast the aft section is



stern 3.9 " gun points skyward

intact, complete with the towering king posts and an imposing aft gun type 88, sitting on an elaborate docking bridge system which forms the weather deck. The gun, completely covered in coral still points skyward and is a focal point of the aft section. It is possible to swim below at deck level past huge mooring bollards to the stern, where 10 mtrs below are her huge twin props.

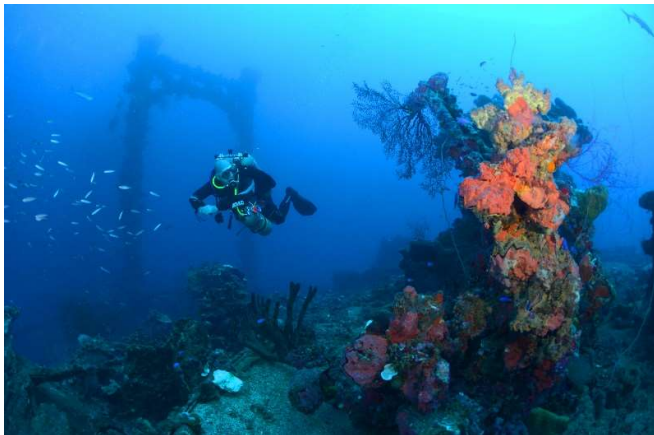
The shallowest part of the wreck is the upper decks at 40 mtrs with the holds at 60mtrs. The aft deck is at 50 mtrs. The seabed is 64 -73 mtrs.

The explosion was of such a magnitude that over 700 Japanese soldiers, billeted in the upper tweens of number 4 hold were killed instantly, and although many of their remains were recovered there are still many human

remains throughout the interior, presumably of those who were killed by concussion in the remaining section of the wreck. A stone budda sits overlooking a memorial plaque just aft of the blast area. This is a decompression dive. Anti aircraft guns flank the upright smoke stack. From here it is possible to enter corridors companionways on several levels. Much of the dividing walls, made of wood have long since gone and this aids a journey through her vast interior. Light streams in through the windows on the shelter and promenade decks. A huge galley. Complete with utensils is located aft of this section. The holds are deep very silty and almost empty.



commemorative plaque and budda



hovering over the aft deck, king post behind, AA gun to right of picture

smothered in a coat of red sea squirts and these can be located below the gun deck at the very stern, a vivid

reminder of the day today workings of this huge vessel.

Deep inside the superstructure the engine room lies silent, intact, and although challenging to access once inside is cavernous, another reminder of just how big a vessel she was before her demise.

This wreck is more suited to technically qualified and equipped divers and a favourite for rebreather divers. A 20/20 helium mix was used as a bottom gas and 27eanx as a travel gas. It is almost impossible to diver her without incurring decompression. With many more “kinder” options, she is much less visited by the average diver. Although only half a wreck, this is a very worthwhile and rewarding dive.

Her funnel lies over to port and two very photogenic Type 95 25mm anti aircraft guns flank the boat deck. Sitting on what appears to be a circular dias or turntable. The starboard gun still pointing defiantly towards the surface, while the port gun angles downward as if in defeat. Both are adorned in corals, encrusting species and invertebrates. All around scattered on the deck are shell casings and unused shells suggesting a fight to the end. The water clarity is quite stunning- some of the best in the lagoon. The stern also boasts a rudder stand and a telegraph, again



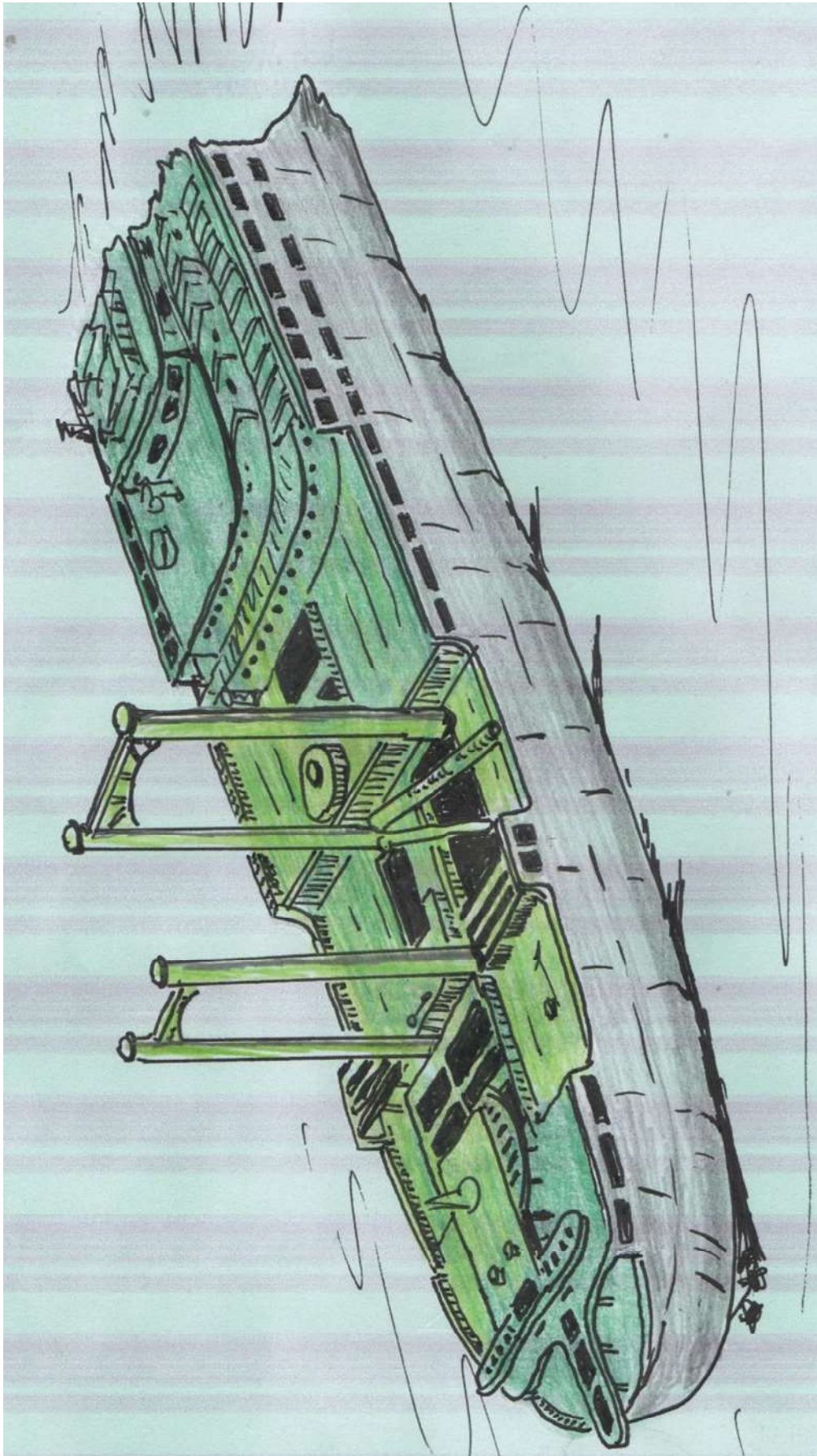
AFT STEERING GEAR WOODEN WHEEL & SPOKES GONE LEAVING ONLY THE BRASS BAND HANGING ON THE RUDDERSTAND



ANOTHER MAJOR FEATUE ARE THE TWIN AA GUNS ON THE AFT DECK



CORAL COVERED AFT DECK, COMPLETE WITH STEERING HELM DEPTH 56 MTRS-NATURAL LIGHT!

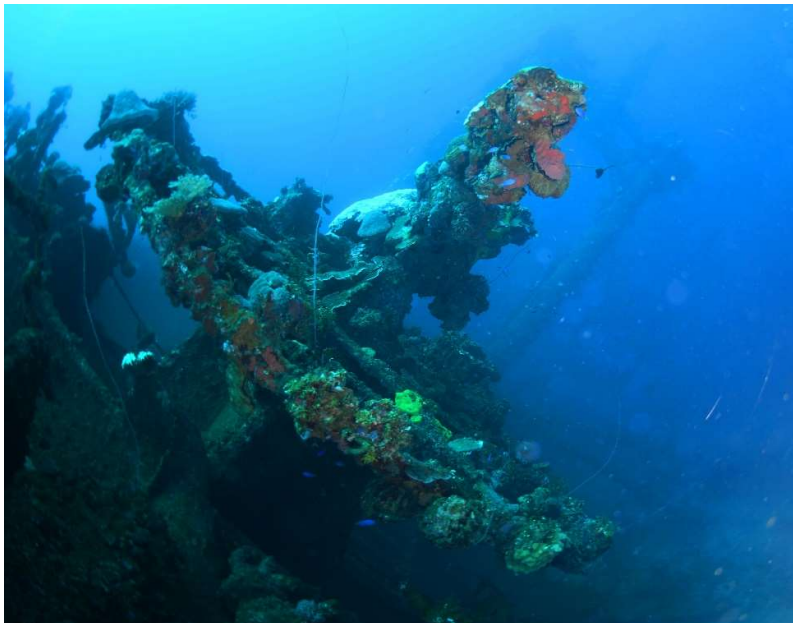


AMAGISAN MARU

Built in 1933 as a cargo liner by Mitsui Buassan Kaisha at Tokyo. She was 454 ft long with a 65 ft beam and a tonnage of 7629 tons. Fitted with diesel engines giving her a speed of 18 knots. Converted in 1941 after a career operating between Yokohama and New York, she became an auxiliary transport for the navy. She was anchored in the 6th fleet anchorage on the 17th Feb 1944 when she was bombed by Curtiss Helldiver and Grumman Avenger aircraft from the carrier Bunker Hill. The fuel in her cargo holds added to the force of the explosion from both torpedoes and bombs and she quickly sank.



She now lies in 40 -60 mtrs on a slope lying on her port side, with her bow shallower than the stern. The bridge lies in 35 mtrs and the fore deck in 30 mtrs. Her name appears in both Kanji and Roman letters welded on her hull. She has much less coral growth than many of the wrecks in the lagoon and is thus less photographically appealing. The bow section sports a 3.7 inch gun on a turntable pedestal, which is now skeletal, covered in encrusting species the gun becomes a blaze of colour under strobe light. The forward holds contain mainly oil drums, and with bulk heads gone the cavernous spaces dwarf the diver. Aircraft wings paravanes, and propellers can still be found amongst the silt and debris which has accumulated in the lower sections of the holds/



Her masts and derricks servicing these holds still reach out into the blue, testimony to the strength of build of these ships.

BOW GUNS STILL STANDS PROUD ON IT TURNTABLE MOUNT.

Lying on the seabed just off the bow is the remains of a fuel truck, and although well decayed the radiator and front section are very photogenic-the target of my 65 @65 4 65 “retirement” dive!



The bridge/ navigation decks rise up 3 levels and support rudder stand and telegraph instrumentation, despite all the wooden decking beginning absent. They also boast a radio room, galley and accommodation areas. There are also two anti aircraft guns flanking the funnel and although one of these has fallen off into the



seabed to port, one still stands defiant pointing skyward, and is very photogenic, reminiscent of the AA guns on the AIKOKO (probably the same type).

Evidence that her lifeboats were stowed here also lies in the form of her outswung davits. The air scoop ventilators for the engine room lie scattered around and mark the access into the engine room -through her engine house skylights. Again this a cavernous area and is very much intact, a place seldom visited,

Catwalks stairwells, gauges, workshops lie within. There are at least 3 floors with anti rooms and corridors

running deep into the interior. The Japanese engine designs are indeed unique and very interesting. Being deep and intriguing it is very easy to overstay and rack up unplanned deco



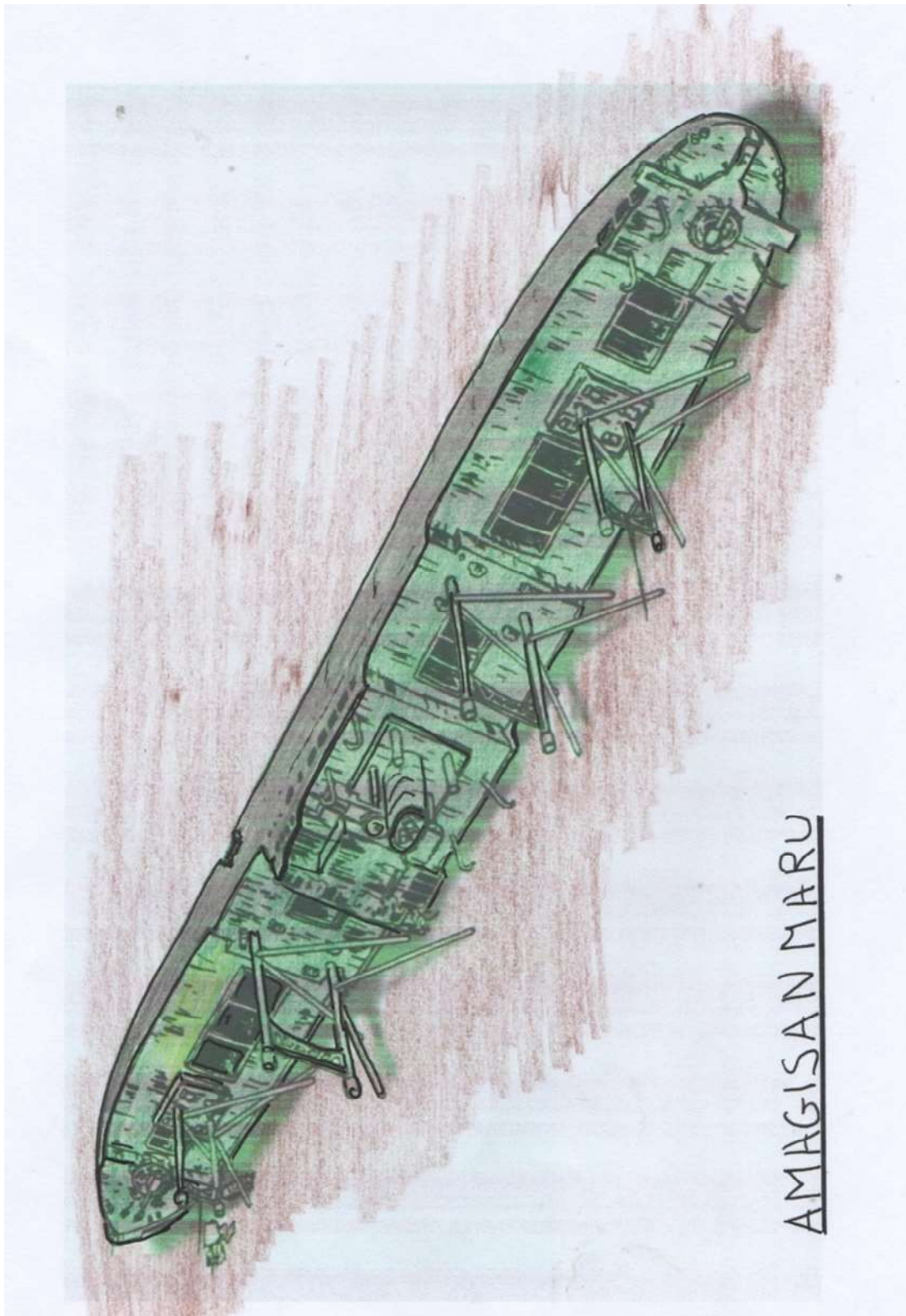
DEEP INSIDE THE INTACT ENGINE ROOM

At this point of the wreck the hold slope down into deeper water quite quickly. The aft holds, 4.5 and 6 resemble the forward ones, flanked with winches, mast hose and kingpost reaching out and some resting on the seabed. These holds are almost empty and can be bypassed. The stern has a deck house with steering gear and a second gun, again a 3.7 inch same as the bow.

Perhaps not the most colourful, picturesque or intriguing of the wrecks, but certainly worthy of a dive for those with time to spare



JACKS HOVER OVER THE WRECK, HUNTING





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- Northern Wrecks and Reefs
- North and Straits of Tiran
- North and Brothers
- Shark Special (Brothers, Deadalus and Elphinstone)
- Deep South St Johns
- 10 Day Red Sea Wreck Special
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We are lucky enough to also have Technical Instructors from SSI and TDI on our team which means we can offer Technical Open circuit and Rebreather courses all the way down to 100m with Trimix so you can go and visit the places very few have been.

Advanced Wreck and Technical Wreck courses are available so you can really see the full potential of the wrecks we have around us.

MY Charlotte the home of The Red Sea Wreck Academy.

We are very lucky to have been working with Peter Collings the founder of The Red Sea Wreck Academy, searching for and diving wrecks that not a lot of people know about. When on board for our Wreck Specials Peter gives in depth, detailed briefings of what to expect on our dives and a presentation about the history of the wreck in question.

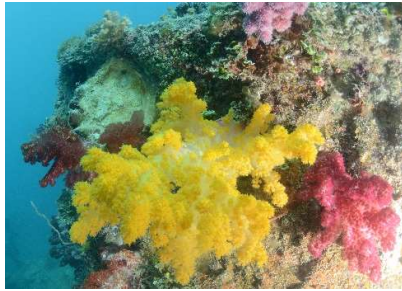
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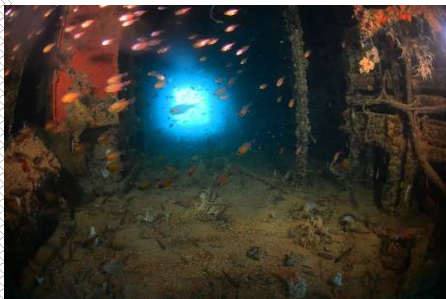
M.V BEAU

One of the non WW2 wrecks, this is a fishing vessel sitting upright in 18 mtrs of water which foundered in a storm. It is totally intact and it is difficult to see how or why it sank. It lies close to the resort and thus makes a great 3rd dive, especially for small numbers. About 40 mtrs long, she would appear to be capable of working in offshore conditions for long periods due to the refrigerated holds. The wheelhouse sits on top of the engine room and refrigeration holds are accessed for and aft. Interconnecting corridors allow for some interesting swim throughs.



The entire exterior is covered in life, from corals to invertebrates and is very colourful. The vertical faces of the hull are indeed a living reef, with a multitude of coral branches, sponges nudibranchs and fish in residence. There are also many crinoids, (featherstars) flowering the wreck in a myriad of colours. A swim right round reveals the rudder and prop and items of equipment now colonised on the sea bed.

The engine room is easily accessible and it is totally intact with diesel engine, generators, pumps, piping valves and control panels. In only 14 mtrs, the depths allow plenty of time to explore the heart of this



wreck.

The refrigeration holds still sport their cooling coils, quite roomy but are otherwise empty. One of the cable drums bears the work NEWARK suggesting that she was outfitted at least in the UK.



The Wheelhouse is full of sweepers and glassfish and the control panels are totally covered in coral growths. While this wreck is by no means of the magnitude of the fleet, it is a great chill dive close to base and if visited by small numbers offers a great chance to explore fully.

FUJIKAWA MARU



THE SHIP; October 1937:Nagasaki. Laid down at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' shipyard as a passenger cargo ship for Toyo Kaiun K. K.6800 TONS, 436 ft long,58ft beam,26ft draught.6 cylinder deiselengine into a single screw.

15 April 1938:Launched and named [FUJIKAWA MARU](#). [1]

1 July 1938:Completed and placed in service with Toyo Kaiun K.K. FUJIKAWA MARU is used on the Japan/North American run and then chartered to Mitsui Bussan K.K. for use to South America and India. She carries passengers and cargoes of raw silk, cotton, jute and flax.

9 December 1940:Requisitioned by the IJN.

18 December 1940:Kobe. Begins conversion to an armed auxiliary aircraft transport at Kawasaki Heavy Industries. Russo-Japanese war era British 5.9-inch guns(Vickers Armstrong,Tyne) are installed at the bow and stern.

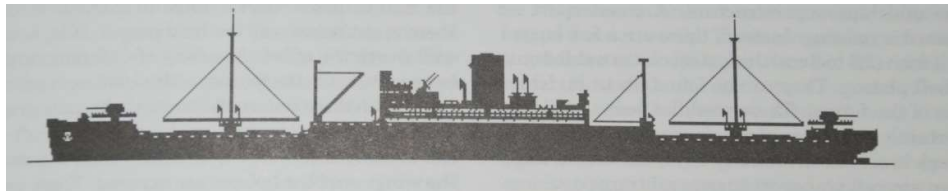
12 September 1943:Alerted by an Ultra signal, LtCdr Carter L. Bennett's USS PERMIT (SS-178) intercepts the convoy. Bennett sets up and fires six torpedoes at three ships in submerged night attacks at 08-23N, 165-12E. He claims several hits including one on FUJIKAWA MARU and two on SHIRETOKO. That same day, light cruiser NAKA departs Truk to assist the torpedoed ships.

4 December 1943:Kwajalein, Marshall Islands. Aircraft from Rear Admiral) Charles A. Pownall's) Task Force 50's USS YORKTOWN (CV-10), LEXINGTON (CV-16) and light carrier USS INDEPENDENCE (CVL-22) attack Kwajalein and Wotje Atolls. They damage FUJIKAWA MARU,

31 December 1943:At 1130, arrives at Truk under tow by MIKAGE MARU No. 18. Probably scheduled for repairs by repair ship AKASHI.

February 1944:FUJIKAWA MARU arrives at Truk and off loads 30 B6N "[Jill](#)" bombers onto Eten Airfield.

17 February 1944: Reserve Captain Takayama Chuyo's anchored FUJIKAWA MARU is torpedoed by a TBF "Avenger" of Rear Admiral Frederick C. Sherman's Task Group 58. 3 that includes USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17) and USS MONTEREY (CVL-26). The torpedo hits FUJIKAWA MARU starboard amidships, aft of the bridge superstructure. She fills with water and begins to slowly sink by the stern. FUJIKAWA MARU finally settles at the bottom of the lagoon on an almost even keel at 138 feet (42 m.) with no casualties.



THE WRECK TODAYA 443 ft. Steamship, Built 1938, 6,938 tons. The passenger cargo ship was converted into an aircraft transport ship and lies upright in 30 metres of water. The trip to Truk is worth it for this wreck alone! The wreck has everything and has often been voted as one of the best wreck dives in the world.



The deck of the Fujikawa Maru is a garden of soft corals anemones and reef fishes.

The signature wreck of Truk Lagoon; a wreck which has everything from stunning coral life, fascinating engine room, and the added bonus of a unique cargo - Zero fighters! This is the most popular wreck in Truk Lagoon. It takes several dives to appreciate the magnitude of this wreck. Her holds contain an amazing assortment of artefacts including three zero fighters-evidence of her role.



The wreck sits upright in just over 32mtrs of water. From stem to stern it is a coral garden. With the exception of her bridge area damaged by the livaboard Thorfin, anemones corals and fish cover the wreck. A centre island vessel with raised fo'c'sle and poop, she is a typical freighter, with winches and masts serving each of her 6 holds-essential for vessels working away from standard docks. Her 6 holds too are intriguing, containing aircraft parts and fuselages, medicine bottles ammunition and oil drums Even her kingpost and masts are a photographer's delight.

Large shoals of fish amass around her bow and stern which both boast guns and telegraphs. The decks and superstructure are smothered in huge carpet anemones with their resident clown fish. Depths range from 8 to 32 metres. She lies south of Etan.

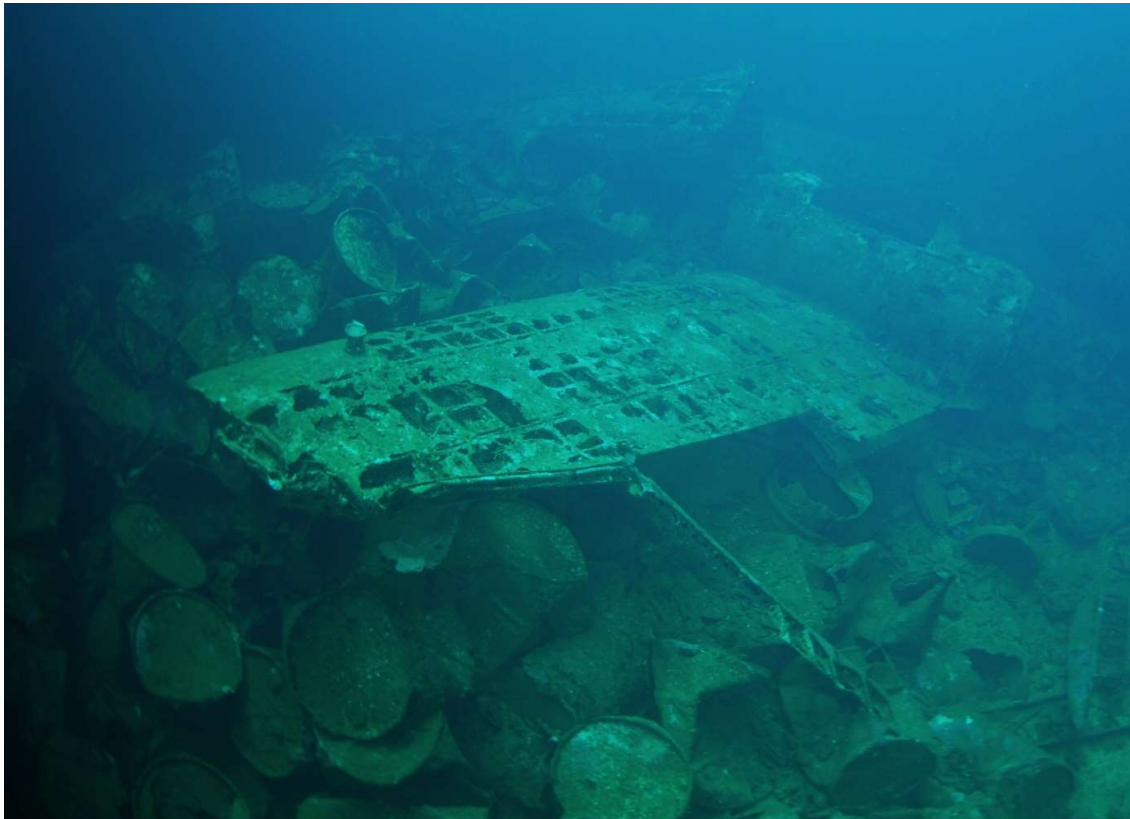


THE WRECK IS A GLORIOUS GARDEN OF SOFT CORALS EVEN HER LIFEBOAT DAIT BECOMES A STRONG SUBJECT FOR PHOTOGRAPHY (ABOVE) DRAPING SOFT CORALS AND HUGE ANEMONIES ARE WIDESPREAD ALONG THE GUNWHALES (BELOW)





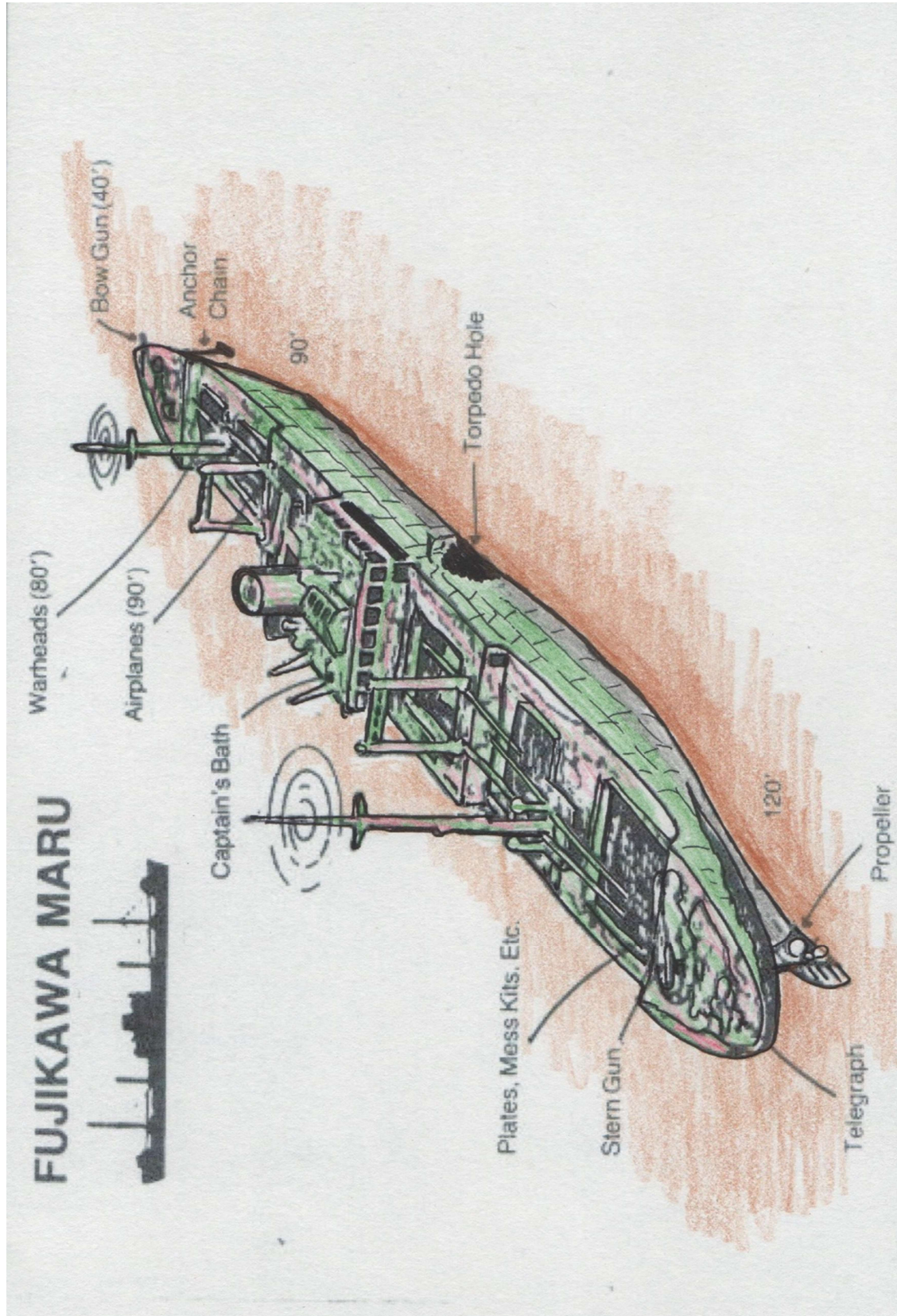
DEEP IN HER HOLDS THE EVIDENCE OF HER PERPOSE; ZERO FIGHTERS





*1NATURE HAS NOT SPARED HER INVASION OF THE INVADER-EVREY
SURFACE IS COVERED IN LIVING ORGASNISMS*





FUJISAN MARU

THE SHIP;28 August 1930:Laid down by Harima Sanbashi (Harima Pier Co.) as Hull No. 179, a 9,517-ton merchant tanker for Iino Shoji Kisen Kaisha K. K., Fuchu. 493 ft long,65ft beam,,7 cylinder diesel engine,16 knots.31 May 1931:Launched and named FUJISAN MARU



1931:On Iino Shoji's North American-Japan oil transport service. Completes eight voyages: four for the IJN, one for Mitsui Bussan, two for Mitsubishi Sekiyu and one for Nippon Sekiyu.

1932:Completes 11 voyages: eight for the IJN, two for Mitsui Bussan and one for Nippon Sekiyu.

1933:Completes 13 voyages: five for the IJN, two for Mitsui Bussan, two for Maruzen Sekiyu, two for Ogura Sekiyu and one for Hayayama Sekiyu.

1934:Completes 11 voyages: eight for the IJN, two for Mitsui Bussan and one for Nippon Sekiyu.

1935:Completes 11 voyages: nine for the IJN, one for Mitsui Bussan and one for Nippon Sekiyu.

1936:Completes nine voyages: seven for the IJN, one for Mitsui Bussan and one for Nomura Jimusho.

1937:Completes eight voyages; seven for the IJN and one for Nippon Sekiyu.

1938:Completes 10 voyages; seven for the IJN and three for Chosen Sekiyu.

1939:Completes seven voyages; five for the IJN, two for Mitsui Bussan and one for Daido Kaiun.

1940:Completes eight voyages; two for the IJN, one for Mitsui Bussan, three for Toa Sekiyu and two for Chosen Sekiyu.

1941:Completes four voyages: one for the IJN and three for Toa Sekiyu Kyokai.

November 1941:Requisitioned by the IJN and registered (commissioned) in the IJN as a Converted Merchant Transport (Oil Supply) in the Kure Naval District.

December 1941:Begins conversion at the Sanoyasu Dockyard. Two 120-mm HA guns and two 25-mm AA guns are fitted and depth charge rails installed. A hydrophone (or passive sonar) is fitted.

7 December 1941:Operation "Z" - The Attack on Pearl Harbour: participates in the replenishment of submarines assigned to the attack .

26 May 1942:Operation "MI" - The Battle of Midway: Oilers FUJISAN and NISSAN MARUs and three cargo ships depart Ominato for the Aleutians with Vice Admiral Hosogaya Boshiro's Northern

29 May 1942:Operation "AL" - The Seizure of Attu and Kiska:

7 August 1942: American Operation "Watchtower" – The Invasion of Guadalcanal, British Solomons:
2 December 1942:

FUJISAN MARU arrives at north entrance to Truk Atoll.

10 December 1942:. FUJISAN and TOA MARUs are attacked by 11 USAAF B-17 bombers and six fighters and damaged. Minelayer TSUGARU comes alongside burning FUJISAN MARU to help extinguish the fires. 30 sailors are KIA and her diesels are wrecked.

12 December 1942:

Transfers comfort bags to auxiliary seaplane carrier SANYO MARU. [2]

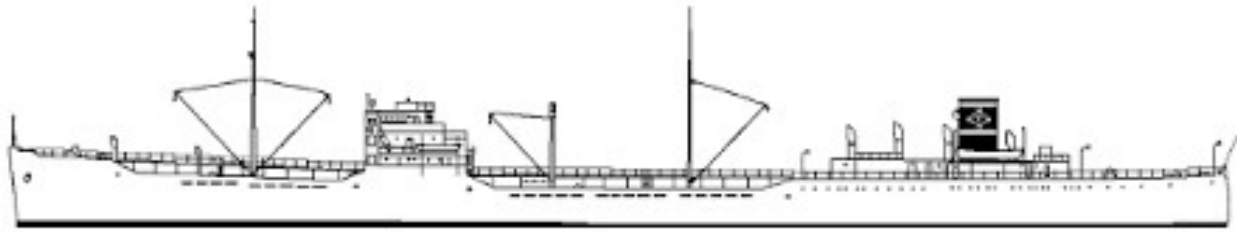
22 December 1942:FUJISAN MARU transfers her cargo of oil to TOA MARU. Later, FUJISAN MARU steams to Rabaul where she probably undergoes temporary repairs by repair ship YAMABIKO MARU.

14 July 1943:FUJISAN MARU arrives at Truk. Transfers 1230 tons fuel oil to light cruiser NAKA and 1327 tons fuel oil to light cruiser ISUZU. Also from 1700 till 2224 refuels light cruiser NAGARA.

23 July 1943: departs Truk in convoy No. 7233 also consisting of tankers TOA and NICHIEI MARUs escorted by TAMANAMI and submarine chaser CH-28. Transports 1900 soldiers of the 122nd Regiment and the 65th Brigade Corps.

14 February 1944: Arrives at Truk. Begins unloading heavy oil.

17 February 1944: American Operation "Hailstone" - The Attack on Truk:



Captain Watanabe Yoshio's (50) FUJISAN MARU is moored to the fuel pier on the south side of Dublon Island. Planes from USS INTREPID (CV-11) report her getting underway at the time of their attacks on Dublon and Eten Island. FUJISAN MARU makes for Truk's North Pass where she is attacked by Douglas SBD "Dauntless" dive-bombers from USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17).

FUJISAN MARU is hit by a single 1,000-lb bomb as she proceeds through the pass to the sea. The hit causes a large fire. All of TF 58's air groups begin attacking ships grouped N to NW of North Pass. In view of these attacks, Captain Watanabe reverses course and returns to the lagoon.

18 February 1944: At dawn, SBD dive-bombers from USS ENTERPRISE (CV-6) arrive over the anchorage and spot FUJISAN MARU between Moen and Dublon Islands underway on an east bound course. The SBDs drop three bombs and score a hit on her stern depth charge storeroom and two near misses. Fires rage and FUJISAN MARU's engine room is heavily damaged. She loses headway, stops and begins to founder.

At 1100, Abandon Ship is ordered. FUJISAN MARU sinks by the stern and settles on the bottom listing to port at a 45-degree angle at a depth of 200 feet. Captain Watanabe survives, but two of his crew and two soldiers aboard the ship are killed in the attacks.

The wreck today. She now lies upright with a list to port on a sloping bottom with her bow at 60 mtrs and her stern in 50 mtrs. She is very similar to the Shinkoko-with connecting walkways (pipebridge) between the fo'c'sle, centre island (bridge) and engine house, offset to port.



The shallowest part of the wreck is her superstructure at 36 mtrs-so beyond the remit of sensible scuba diving! Twin tanks and plenty of gas is required!-and training!

The fo'c'sle boasts the anchor winch and a gun platform, although the gun is



missing (removed?) The bridge area, being swept by fire, has become skeletal, which helps with access into the interior. Telegraph is upright but the compass binnacle lies over to port. It is possible to use the stair well portal down to the lower deck.

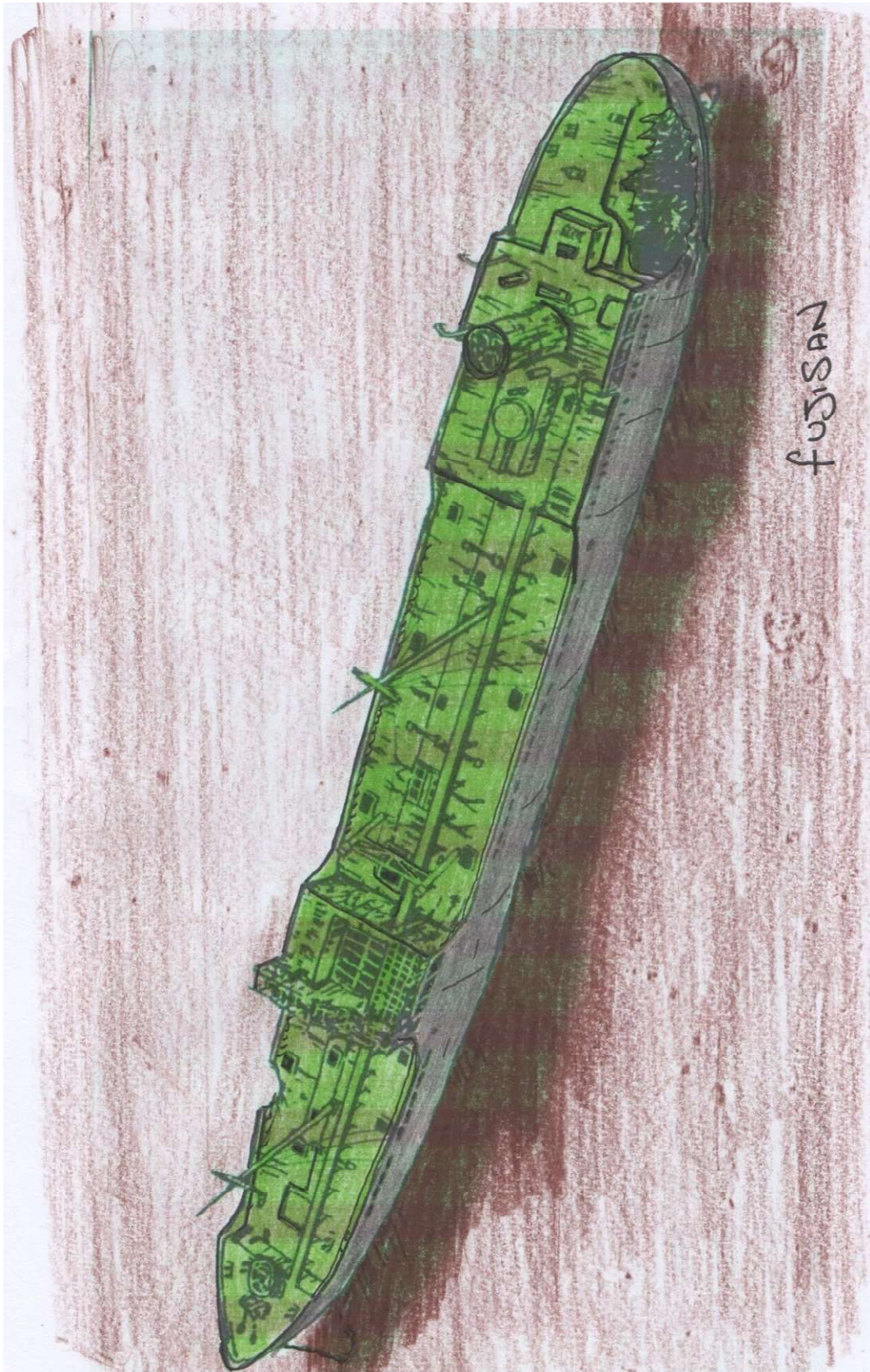


The long swim to the stern passes pumphouses, her king post and mainmast plus many tank hatches. There is much evidence of bomb damage and again fire, while her huge engine room is accessible, exploring this should be at the start of, perhaps a second dive starting at her stern . There are 5 floors to explore and the port side has extensive damage. All The features you would expect to find are here catwalks, electrical panels, switch gear, pumps valves, workshops, even lamps still house their bulbs. Multiple shades of rust and concretion cover the surfaces and a brilliant blue hue percolates through. Its very easy to stay here to long. Nitrogen absorption waits for no man, woman or diver!

Taken from 5 floors in, this shot, pointing towards the light shows three levels of catwalks, and a way out!



2nd the stern(docking) telegraph incumbent with its voice pipe is now home to an albino anemone, clown fish will lurk somewhere



IJN FUMIZUKI

THE SHIP

320ft. **1,900 ton destroyer** Mutsuki
Class(Lancer) built at Osaka in1924, fitted with
Parson steam turbines (Wallsend on Tyne).

1941 17 July-29 August:

Arrived Sasebo, then docked for refitting:
improved underwater sound detection equipment installed.

16 September:

Heavy damage: in collision with transport KACHIDOKI MARU in the Formosa Strait.
taken to Mako for emergency repairs.



1941 1-7th February:

Troop evacuation run to Guadalcanal (cover); towed disabled MAKINAMI back to Shortlands.

4 May:

Arrived in Yokosuka from Truk escorting submarine tender HEIAN MARU, then docked for repairs.

11 May-18 August:

At Sasebo for maintenance and refitting: included removal of aft torpedo mount and Nos. 2 and 4 main guns
in favour of added 25mm machine-guns and replacement of single 7.7mm machine-guns abreast bridge by
dual 13mm.

3-4 January 1944:

Departed Rabaul, heading for Kavieng. Minor damage: in air raid near Kavieng due to near-misses and
strafing: minor flooding, unknown number of casualties (total of 40 between FUMIZUKI and SATSUKI).

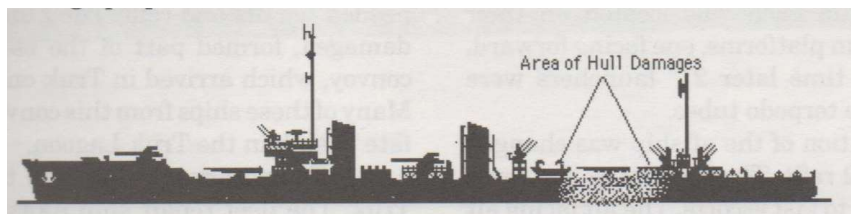
30 January-6 February:

Escorted convoy from Rabaul to Truk. Minor damage: in air attack near Los Negros due to strafing.

17-18 February:

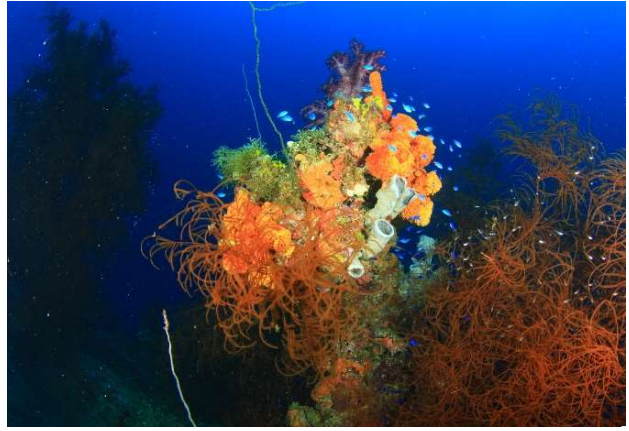
Sunk: in U.S. air raid on Truk . Torpedo hit on 17 February caused gradual flooding which led to ship
sinking on 18 February despite assistance from MATSUKAZE and HAKACHI. 29 killed; survivors
included Comdesdiv 22 Commander Oka Michio and Lieutenant Commander

THE WRECK TODAY;The Fumitsuki lies in about 38-40metres of water, with the deck at about 33metres
and a small list to port. It is evident from her size she was sleek and fast. The bow section is twisted over
and the bridge/wheelhouse is almost upside down. The radio tripod is covered in soft corals as are the davits.



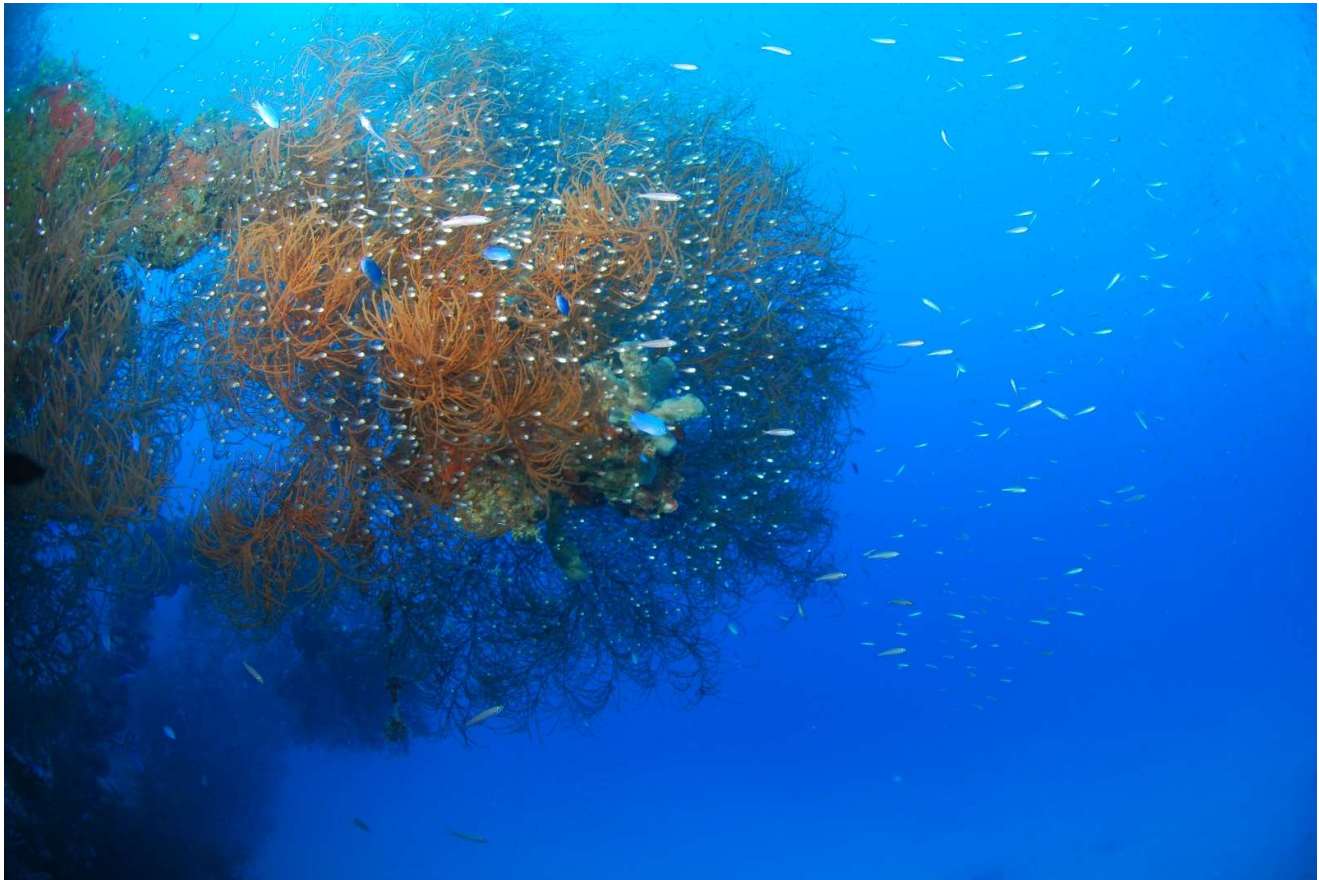
One of the more impressive features
is the torpedo launchers. They hold
three torpedoes and are fired from a
swivel mounted launcher .She is

covered in large fan corals and eagle rays patrol the perimeter. Her sleek lines are unmistakable .A superb
deeper and exciting dive which requires decompression to get the most out of the dive.

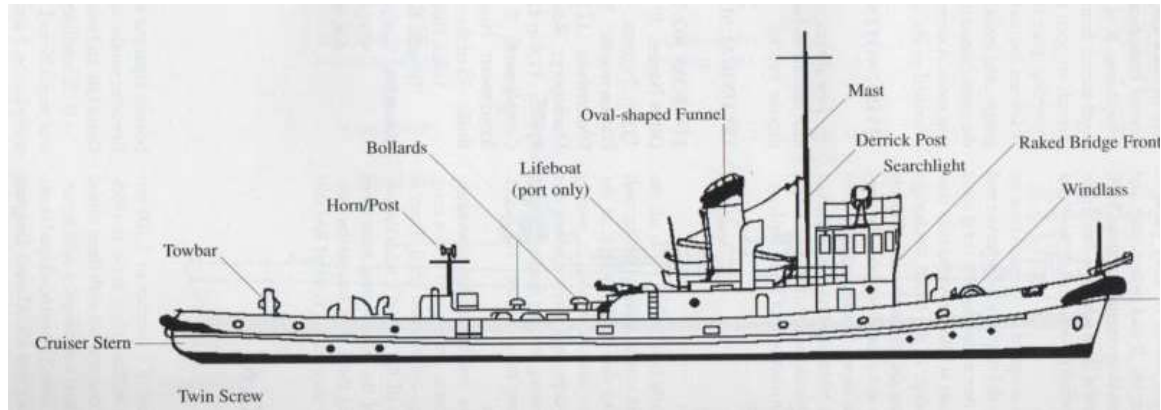


Above left; interior control room for the torpedo launcher ; above right the entire wreck is covered in thick bushes of coral interspaced with tube sponge. The water is crystal clear allowing for a cobalt blue background.

Below; her tripod mast runs out almost horizontal and ,like the rest of the wreck is covered in coral growth.

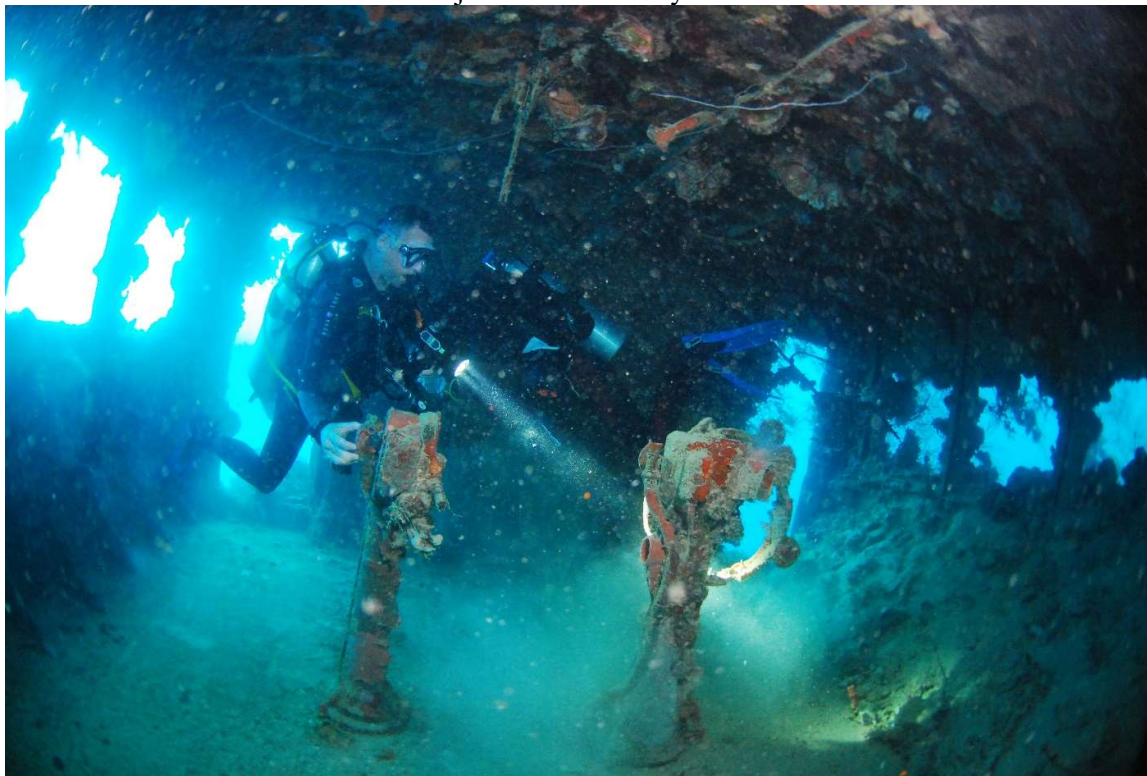


IJN FUTAGAMI FLEET TUG



IJN FUTAGAMI HASHIMA CLASS FLEET SALVAGE TUG: Displacement: 625 tons; Length: 131 feet; Beam 32 feet; Engine: 2 coal/heavy oil fired reciprocating engines, 2 shafts; Max Speed: 14.5 kts. Mission: Salvage. Armament: 2-25 MM anti-aircraft guns; depth charges. Crew: 59. Launched: 1939.

The Futagami was a Hashima Class salvage tug. Perhaps one of the smallest wrecks in Truk. Usually overlooked because it is located close to a small run off and suffers from poor visibility at times. She was built by Harima Sanbashi Company of Aioi. The vessel was equipped with two 2-ton and one 5-ton salvage derrick and an assortment of salvage pumps. She lies bow down from 10 to 30 mtrs. Her wheel house is perhaps the highlight of the dive, complete with control instruments and adorned in corals. The wreck is intact and its cause of loss uncertain, but much of the functional equipment is still in place except for the derricks. Located just off Dublon by the "river" mouth.

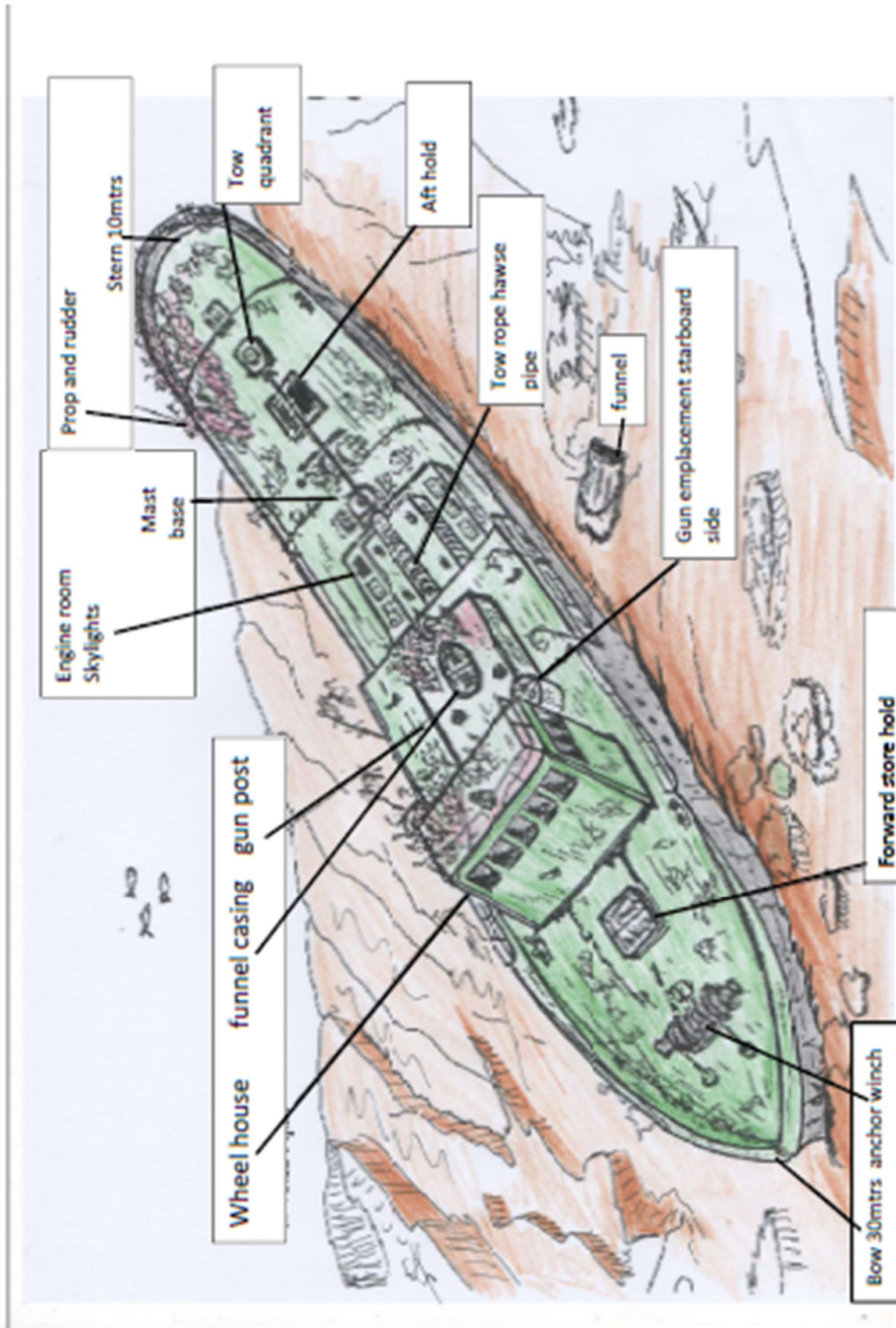


3 CAREFUL WITH FINS EUGENE- THE SILENT FLOOR IS EASILY DISTURBED IN THE WHEEL HOUSE, HER NAVIGATION INSTRUMENTS STILL IN PLACE



In stark contrast to the engine rooms of the oilers and liners ,there ain't much room in here-especially if first in has a bloody great camera! The way in is pretty concealed and was "missed out" in the brief, but some bugger would surely follow me in! Small, compact and intact all the workings are still here-less concretion and better viz than outside.Still outside has its treasures too(below)



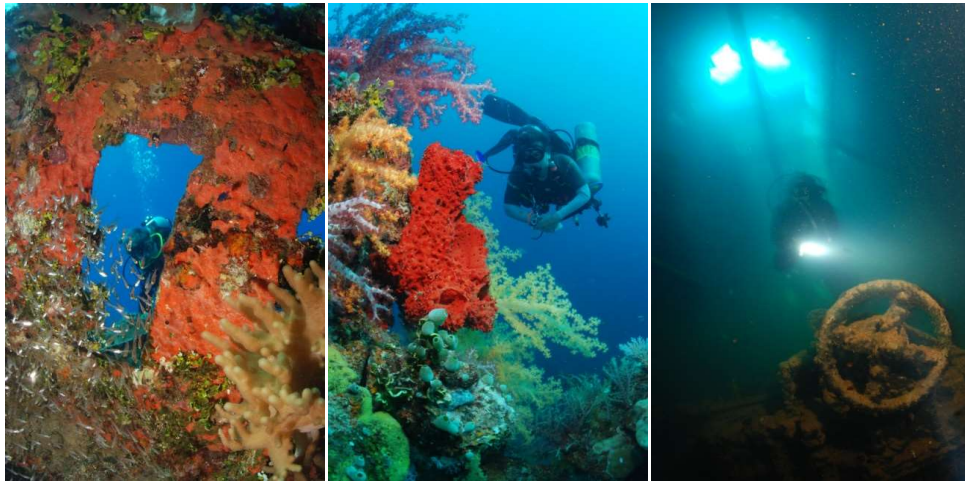
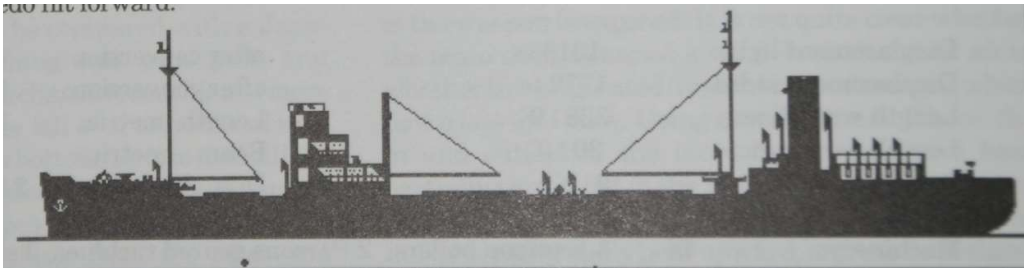
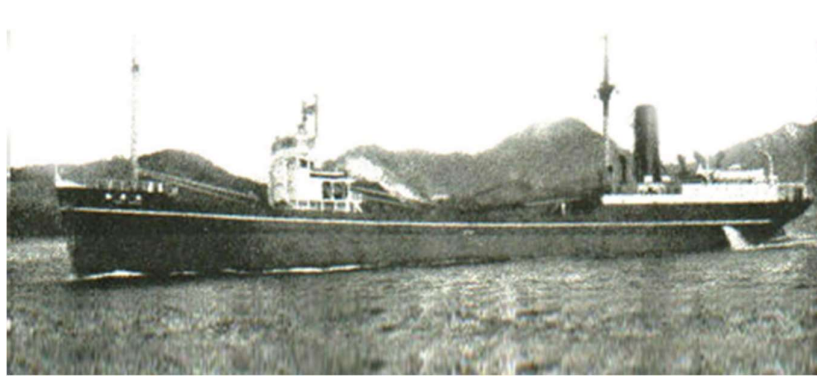




Telegraph, rudderpost, voice pipes-all still in situ in the tugs wheel house.



GOSEI MARU



Both the interior and exterior of the Gosei Maru has much to offer the visiting diver.

The Gosei Maru was launched in August 1937 from the Tsurumi Seitetsu Zosen KK (Tsurumi Iron Works Dockyard) at Yokohama for Koun Kisen K. K. Although owned by this company, the new ship was managed by Yamashita Kisen Kaisha. She was a coastal freighter of 1,931 tons gross, 82.3 metres (271.6 feet) long and 12.2 metres (40.0 feet)

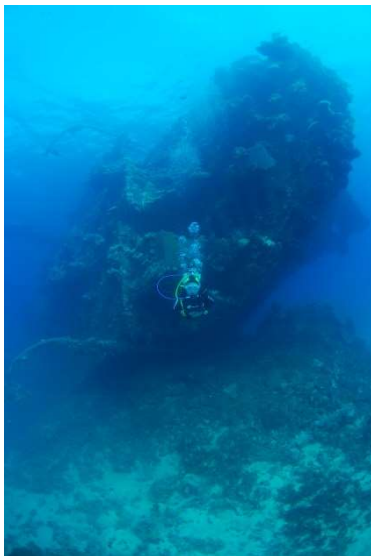
wide. Powered by a Tsurumi built coal powered reciprocal steam engine, the Gosei Maru was not a particularly large ship.

On the morning of 17 February 1944, the Gosei Maru was lying at anchor on the north-eastern side of Uman Island in Chuuk Lagoon. The Lagoon had already been attacked by hundreds of American planes over the previous 24 hours as Operation Hailstone was unleashed on the Japanese fleet



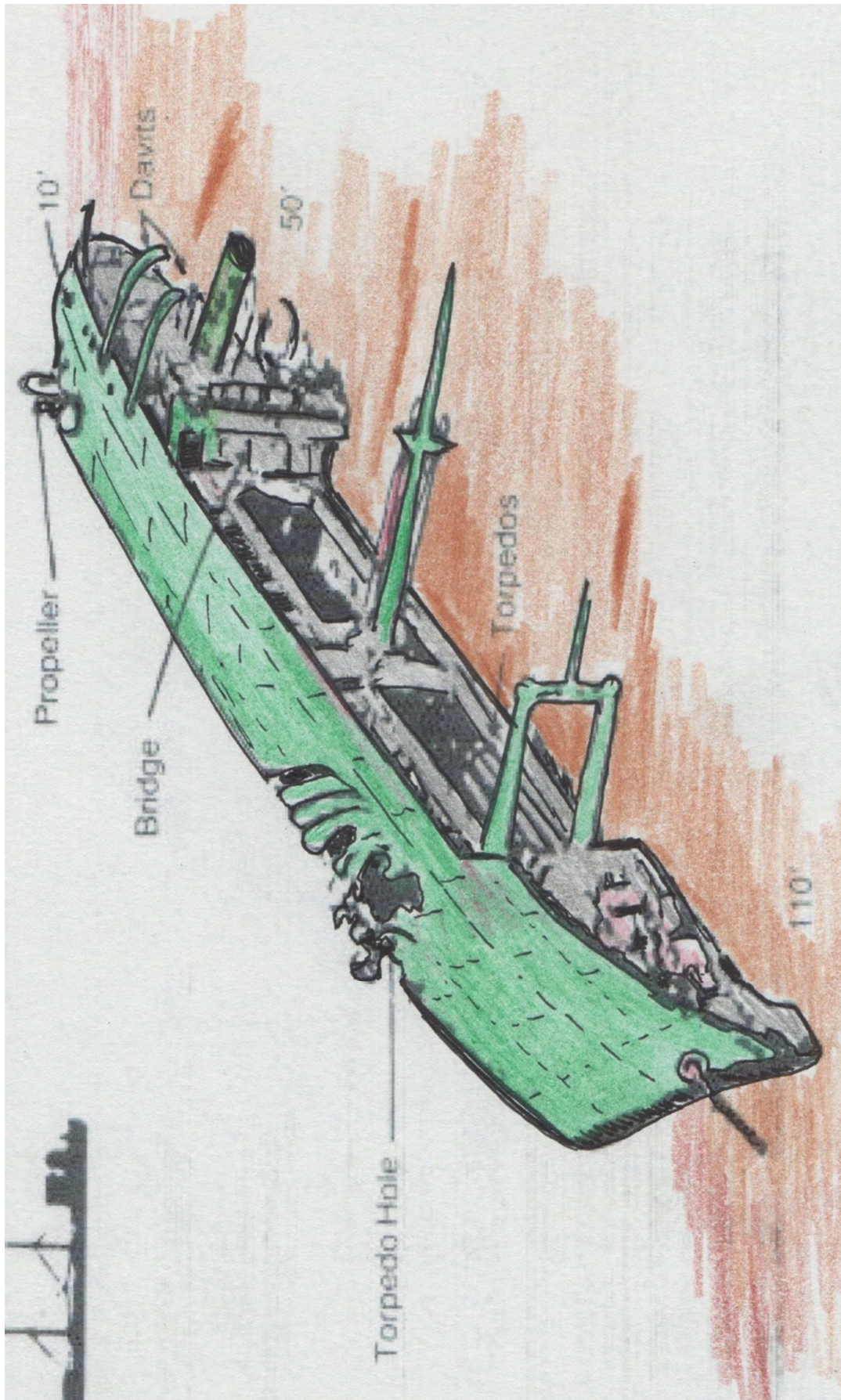
anchored in the lagoon. On 17 February, she was attacked by dive bombers. The photo below appears to show the Gosei under attack, perhaps a bomb exploding on the port side amidships. The ship faced into the easterly wind when at about 0918 hours aircraft of USS Monterey and USS Bunker Hill (Strike 3C) attacked the helpless ship. A torpedo bomber from the Monterey attacked the Gosei Maru (after two unsuccessful attempts by other planes) and scored a direct hit on the starboard side near hold one.

A smaller vessel at 272 ft and 1931 tons, a costal cargo vessel, lying bow down, with her stern just below the surface. This wreck makes a great second or third dive. Huge torpedoes lie in her forward holds with the masts reaching out, still in place. The raised fo'c'sle is accessible and lies in 27 metres of water. The main superstructure has collapsed due to the attitude of the wreck and bomb damage but it is her engine room which holds the greater interest. She's an old vessel borne out by her triple expansion engine which is uncased and it's easy to see her big ends/conrods and reversing gears as well as the pressure chambers. Her prop and rudder are covered in vast coral growth and many reef fishes thrive here. The hull has many hard coral blocks and these have their own population of fish.



Torpedo lying off the wreck part of the Gosae Maru's cargo.bottom-coral encrusted propeller





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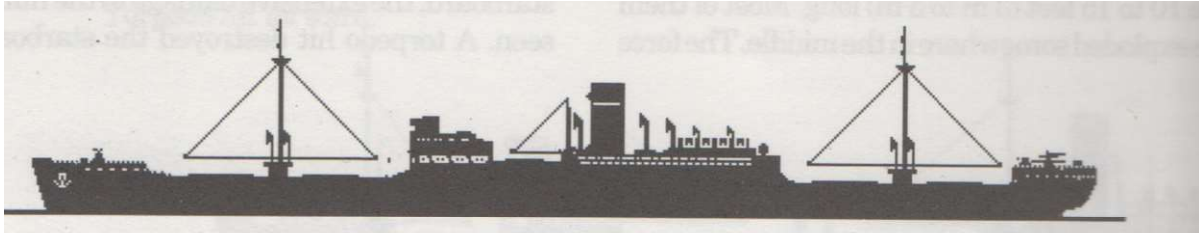
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HANAKAWA MARU



Perhaps one of the least dived, yet most beautiful wrecks in Truk Lagoon. The Hanakawa Maru lies out in the Fairchuk Islands, and for many years was deemed unsafe to dive due to leaking drums of aviation fuels. This hazard does not seem to have affected the marine life.

Built in 1942 by Kawasaki Dockyard Co, Kobe .She was 367ft x52 x30 ft, 4740 tons, fitted with diesel engines and classed as a War standard type 1b passenger-cargo

Sunk on the 18th Feb 1944 by aircraft from the carriers Bunker Hill and Monterey. The ship was unloading army troops at the time and some 216 fatalities were crew as well as troops. Engulfed by flames as bombs ignited the aviation fuel she sank in minutes, thus preventing further explosions. This would account for the relative intactness of the wreck.



The wreck lies close to the island of Tol Island on a sandy bottom which does cause some reduced visibility. It is therefore best dived in calm fine weather. She sits upright her masts almost reaching the surface, and she is covered in a heavy luxuriant growth of soft and hard coral. The raised fo'c'sle has no gun but 2 huge winches

and there are many whip corals here. Moving aft there is a huge torpedo hole in the starboard side of number 2 hold. Some of the cargo has spilled onto the seabed.



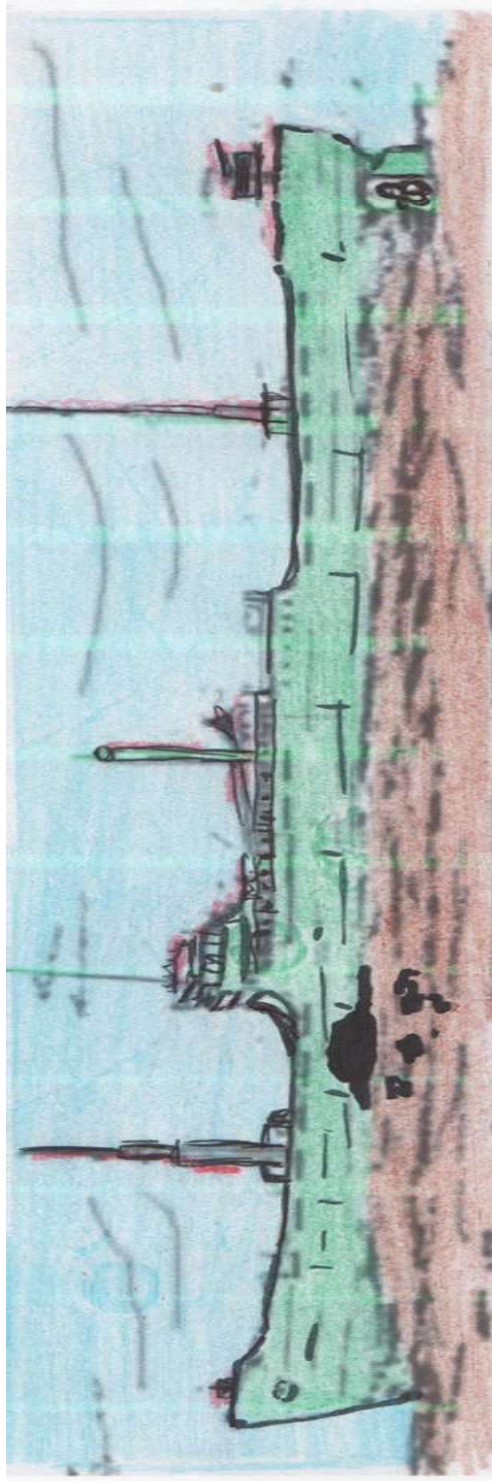
Above; coral encrusted bow, below coral framed companionway



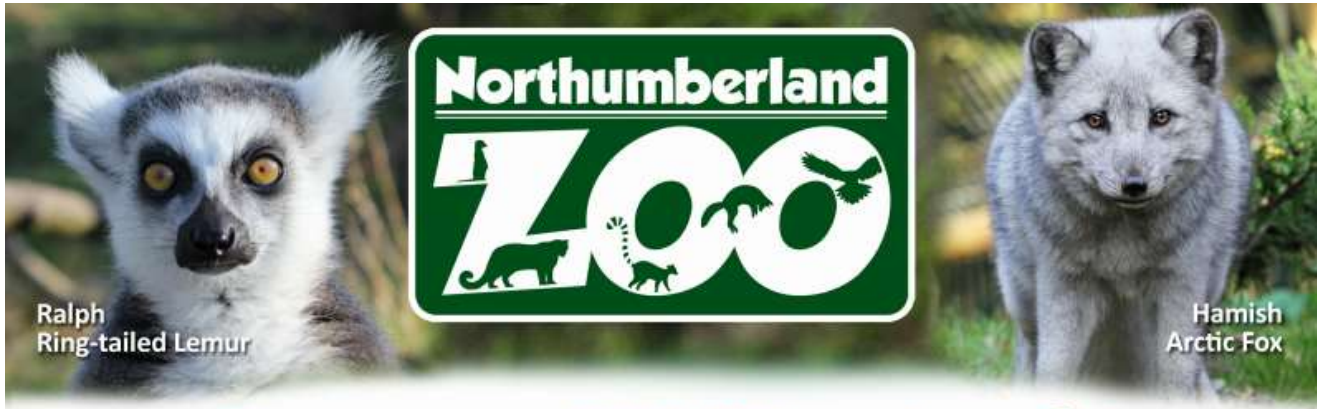
The holds have nothing of interest save barrels, so most of the exploration is at deck and superstructure level, and of course the masts. The superstructure can be completely explored despite some of the beams having collapsed, with connecting companionways. There are many swim thoughts on several levels but beware of silt.

The funnel has broken off and lies back towards port. Crews quarters flank the engine house, and while the upper sections of the engine room can be explored the lower sections are very silty and vis disappears quickly. The stern is very interesting-the raised poop has a gun mount supporting a short barrelled anti aircraft gun, all totally covered in marine growth, with soft corals anemones and sponge obscuring many of the aft deck navigation controls. Below in the aft compartment is a remote steering wheel, a challenging photo subject due to the lack of room light and the ever present silt.

It takes several dives to fully appreciate the beauty of this wreck. The staggering amount of marine life and coral growth would provide the photographer with endless subjects scenes and sea life. The masts offer a fabulous slow ascent for those entering decompression- especially the 4 posted king. While the wreck lacks an interesting cargo it is a wonderful example of nature's ability to conquer transform and thrill.







Ralph
Ring-tailed Lemur

Hamish
Arctic Fox

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Karli
Snow Leopard

HEIAN MARU (平安丸)



19 June 1929:Osaka. Laid down as a 11,616-ton passenger-cargo liner by the Osaka Iron Works for the Nippon Yusen K. K. (NYK) Line.She was 511 ft long,66ft beam draught 30 ft, twin screw powered by two 8-cylinder diesel engines.

16 April 1930:Launched and named [HEIAN MARU](#).

18 December 1930:Departs Hong Kong for Seattle, Washington on her maiden voyage.

3 October 1941:Requisitioned by the IJN.

15 October 1941:Registered as a prospective submarine tender in the Yokosuka Naval District. Begins conversion at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' shipyard at Kobe. Four 6-inch (152-mm) 41st Year Type single mount guns, one 3.5 m range finder, two Type 93 dual 13-mm machine guns and one 1100-mm diameter and one 900-mm diameter search lights are fitted. A degaussing cable (anti-magnetic mine device) is also fitted.

30 December 1941:Completes conversion. Thereafter, HEIAN MARU is assigned to Vice Admiral Shimizu Mitsumi's (36) (former CO of 3rd China Expeditionary Fleet) Sixth Fleet (Submarines) in Rear Admiral Sato Tsutomu's (40) SubRon 1, Combined Fleet, based at Kwajalein.



1 January 1943:
HEIAN MARU is in the Sixth Fleet in Rear Admiral (later Vice Admiral) Mito Hisashi's (42) SubRon 1 as the tender for flagship 1-9 and SubDiv 2 .USAAF Fifth Air Force B-17 "Flying Fortress" and B-24 "Liberator" bombers attack shipping in Rabaul's

Simpson harbour. HEIAN MARU is targeted by several bombers, but escapes damage. She fires a total of 8,000 13.2-mm rounds in return.

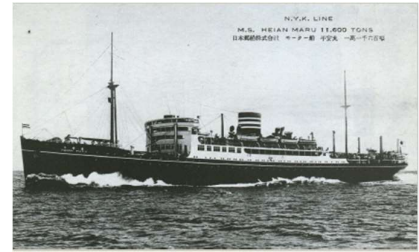
3 January 1943: Rabaul is attacked by B-17s based at Espiritu Santo. About 0630 (local), HEIAN MARU is again targeted by several bombers. They score a number of near misses off her port side. The flak crews of HEIAN MARU fire 7,638 13.2-mm rounds to ward off the attack.

20

September

1943:

HEIAN MARU departs Shanghai in convoy "Tei No. 2" (T2-GO Transportation Strategy) also consisting of transports KIYOSUMI and GOKOKU MARUs and flying boat tender AKITSUSHIMA (see SHIPWRECKS OF D'PEARL BAY) escorted by destroyers HIBIKI, MAKINAMI and YAMAGUMO. The convoy carries 5,940 men of the IJA's 17th Division's headquarters staff, 53rd infantry regiment, 54th Regiment, 3rd Battalion, 1st Battalion, 23rd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Company, 17th Engineers, 17th Tank Regiment, a car platoon and the division's Communication Station, 650 vehicles and 6,000 cubic meters of supplies. She embarks the CO of the 17th Infantry Division, 1,900 of his men, lead engineer troops and 240 wheeled vehicles. She also carries 900 cubic meters of supplies and a cargo of torpedoes. KIYOSUMI MARU carries 1,300 men of the 17th Division's 53rd Infantry Regiment including the regimental commander and 170 vehicles and 2,800 cubic meters of supplies. GOKOKU MARU carries 1,850 men. AKITSUSHIMA carries 500 men including the brigade commander, 10 vehicles and 400 cubic meters of supplies. Destroyers HIBIKI, MAKINAMI and YAMAGUMO each carry 130 men.



17-18 February 1944: American Operation "Hailstone" - The Attack on Truk:

HEIAN MARU is anchored on the leeward side of Dublon Island with the hospital ship TENNO MARU (later HIKAWA MARU No. 2) and cargo ship URAKAMI MARU when at 0435 (JST) an air raid alarm is given. HEIAN MARU, carrying Vice Admiral Takagi and his Sixth Fleet staff, weighs anchor and steers a zigzag course N of Dublon. The Japanese expect a hit-and-run attack like the one on Kwajalein two years earlier. Grumman F6F-3 "Hellcats" repeatedly strafe HEIAN MARU, but without effect, at least initially. Her crew fires a total of 400 rounds, some from their Arisaka rifles, in an attempt to ward off the attacks.

At 1310, HEIAN MARU is attacked by a single Grumman SB2C "Helldiver" that comes in from astern. It drops two bombs that damage one of her shafts and floods the No. 6 hold aft. The crew pumps some fuel to her bow tanks and manages to correct the trim. After sunset, HEIAN MARU moors at the pier at Dublon Island. Vice Admiral Takagi and his staff disembark. The crew starts to unload the spare Type 95 oxygen-propelled torpedoes.

18 February 1944: At 0110, another air raid commences and HEIAN MARU gets underway again. At 0304, she is hit by two bombs that explode above her engine room on the port side. A fire starts in a compartment adjoining the officers' mess and soon rages out of control. It reaches the bridge and threatens the hold containing the remaining torpedoes. At 0312, the ship's bow is hit by two bombs and the rate of sinking increases. At about 0500, Captain Tamaki orders the flag lowered, then orders Abandon Ship. The survivors, including Tamaki, reach the base of the 85th Submarine Base Unit. 16 passengers and one crewman are KIA as is a civilian from the staff of the Nippon Yusen Co. 25 men are wounded.

At 0930, Grumman TBF "Avenger" torpedo bombers from USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17) attack the still burning HEIAN MARU. She is hit on the port side amidships by a torpedo that causes her to capsize to port. She sinks at 07-23N, 151-52E. HEIAN MARU comes to rest on her port beam in about 110 feet of water.

THE WECK TODAY with a Length of 155 metres and 11,616 tons; she is the largest wreck in Truk Lagoon.. She lies in the old submarine anchorage. Long Lance torpedoes can be found. Periscopes lie in two companionways on levels below and aft of the bridge..

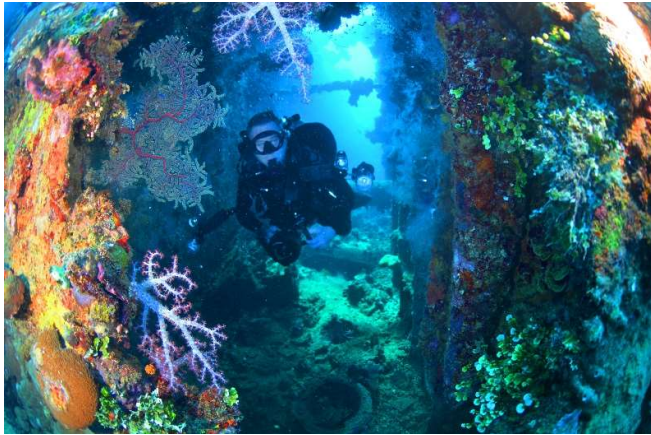
The wreck is massive. Her port to starboard companionway can only be likened to diving down the lift shaft of a sky scraper. It would take weeks to fully explore this vessel .

Her huge masts run out almost horizontally flanked by the cavernous holds. The masts are is greatly extended by the huge coral bushes where many varieties of fish swarm.

The fo'c'sle sports a telegraph and a large gun platform, although the gun is missing. The hull carries her name in large letters .The Starboard anchor is stowed while the port chain runs out from the wreck..

The forward holds still retain much of their cargo- shells and torpedo's the later being some 25+ ft long and the apparatus to remove them as required. Due to the narrow opening these holds are quite dark.

The superstructure has 5 floors and much of the wood panelling has rotted away, leaving a framework easy

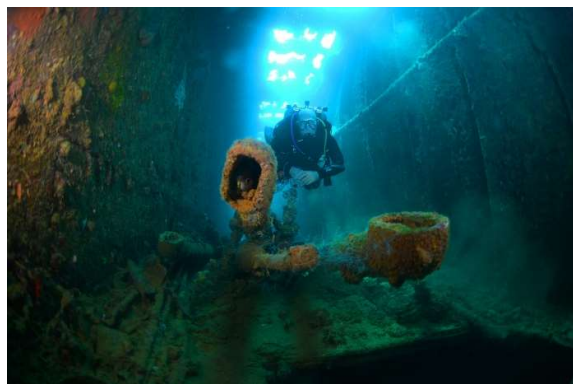


RSWA member passing through a passageway between the 3rd and 4th floor of the superstructure

to navigate. Many fitting have fallen seaward but her large radio room is still evident behind the navigation deck. The structure has of course been invaded by nature, and corals form a colourful framework on the

superstructure .Its easy to glide from floor to floor without changing depth, at round 18 mtrs it's a perfect area for the latter stages of a dive.

The companionway on the starboard side stored periscopes and they remain there to this day. From this

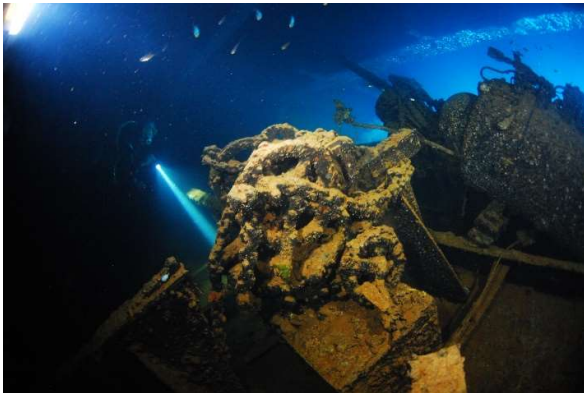
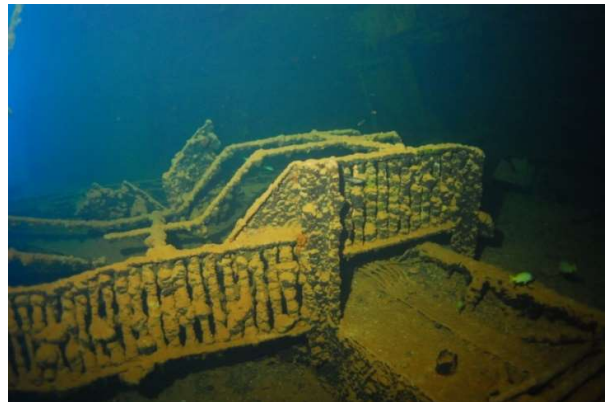


companionway doors lead down into the superstructure, being at 90degrees from true they can be very confusing and should only be entered if following a guide or by lining out. It also requires reverse profiling, and it is better to enter from a deeper access point and emerge up into the shallower companionway in the latter stages of the dive.

Her engine room is vast and easy to explore with a good torch. the journey through 5 floors is memorable. One impressive sight, and there are many, is the huge hole created by the torpedo. The engine itself is huge and is flanked on all sides by anti rooms, workshops, stores, machine rooms ,control panels and switch boards. It is very difficult to retain an aspect of just which floor you are on as in is down a floor and down is along! This is where the local guides earn their keep. The engine room is dive in its own right and exhilarating.



4 diving deeper "down" through the floors is a horizontal swim, here we are 4 floors in

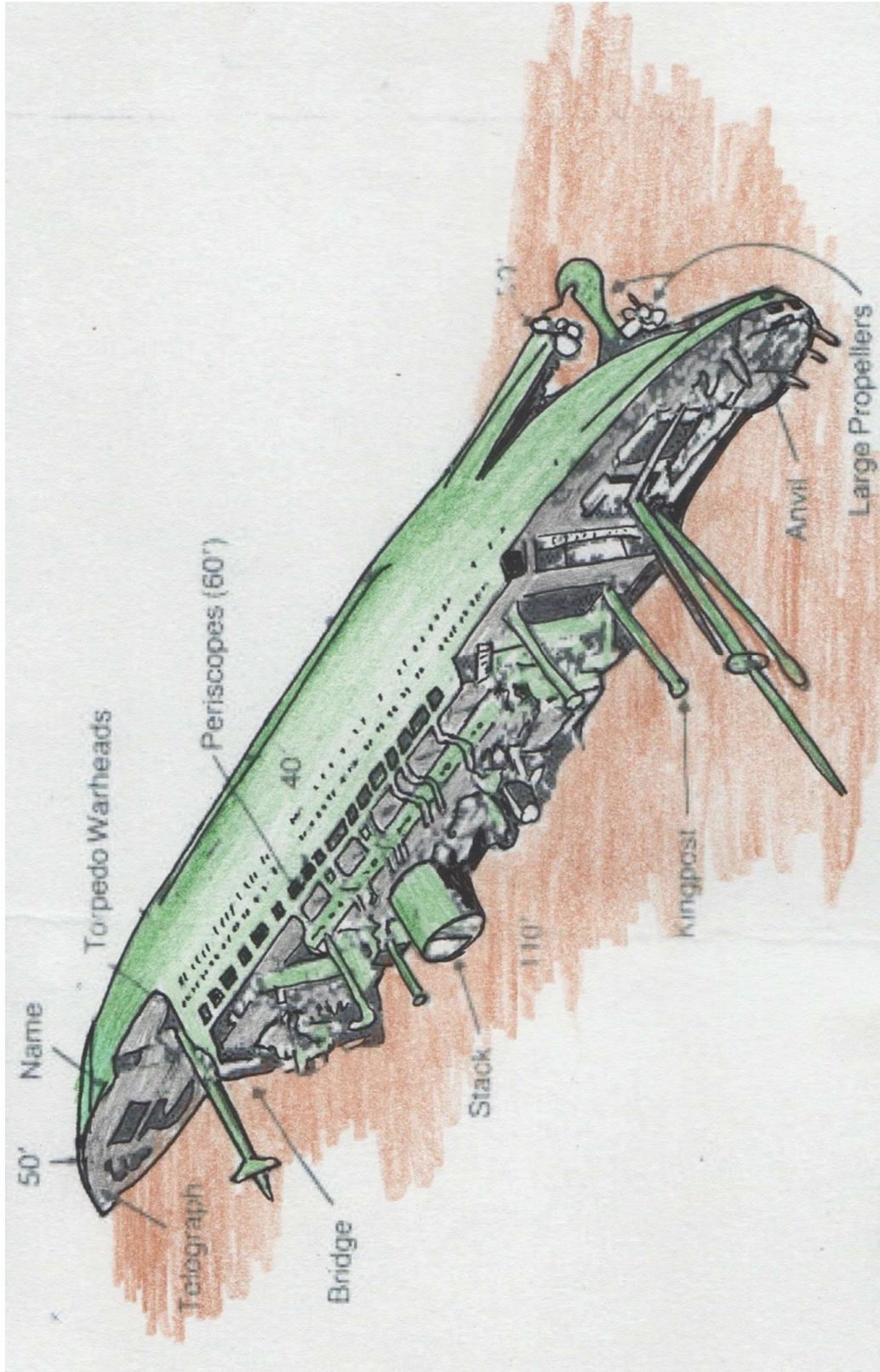


Behind the superstructure is the distinctive king post- a trade mark of Japanese design and this runs out again horizontally. This has become a huge suspended coral reef- and offers a plethora of photo opportunities. The diversity of life and colour is quite staggering, and given the shallow depth light conditions are great- a dive in its own right especially with a camera.

one of the rear holds #4 is completely filled with crates of beer many still "hanging on the wall" and there are more war time artefacts in #5 some spilling out of the hold onto the sea bed, including gas masks, oxygen cylinders a field gun and artillery pieces.

Finally, we arrive at the stern, where the poop deck rises out from the aft deck. The crew's quarters are found here as is the steering assembly, one level below. Two huge props and her rudder are still in place.





HOKI MARU



E 1921:

Dumbarton, Scotland. Laid down by William Denny & Brothers Ltd. for Union SS Co. of New Zealand, London as a 7,113-tons passenger/cargo ship with accommodation for 12 passengers. The ship is unusual as an early motorship with two large 8 cylinder 4 stroke diesel engines originally with blast injection.

28 November 1921: Launched and named HAURAKI.

13 May 1922: Completed and registered at London with

1940: Requisitioned by the British Ministry of War as a general transport. Albert

12 July 1942: Indian Ocean, near Ceylon. IJN armed merchant cruisers HOKOKU and AIKOKU MARUs capture HAURAKI at 17-36S, 80-27S. After capture, a

Japanese prize crew is put on board HAURAKI. The deck crew is locked below, but the engine crew is engaged under guard to run the ship's machinery. In the course of the voyage back to Japan the engine crew manages to pitch most of the spare machinery parts and engine plans over the side and dump diesel into the lubricating oil tanks. As a result, the Japanese never obtain much use from the ship.

July 1942: Arrives at Penang, Malaya.

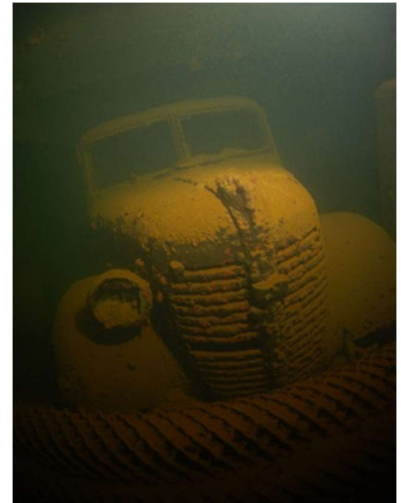
29 August 1942: HAURAKI is taken over by the 10th Special Base Force personnel. The Japanese prize crew disembarks and returns to HOKOKU MARU.

September 1942 Renamed HOKI MARU. Ship is operated by Mitsui Kisen K.K. personnel.

31 December 1942: Registered in the IJN as an auxiliary transport (Otsu) category attached to the Yokosuka Naval District with Yokosuka as home port under Navy's instruction No. 2447. Assigned that same day directly to the Navy's Department.

Arrives at Truk anchors off Eten Island. USS ESSEX (CV-9), USS YORKTOWN (CV-10) bombers and USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17) torpedo planes hit HOKI MARU, loaded with aviation fuel, bombs, ammunition, two tractors, four Isuzu Type 94 trucks, cars, diggers, two bulldozers, one prime mover, steamrollers, etc. The transport's midship is devastated by bomb damage and the foreship opened up by gasoline explosions. HOKI MARU sink at 07-21N, 151-56E with the loss of 23 crewmen.





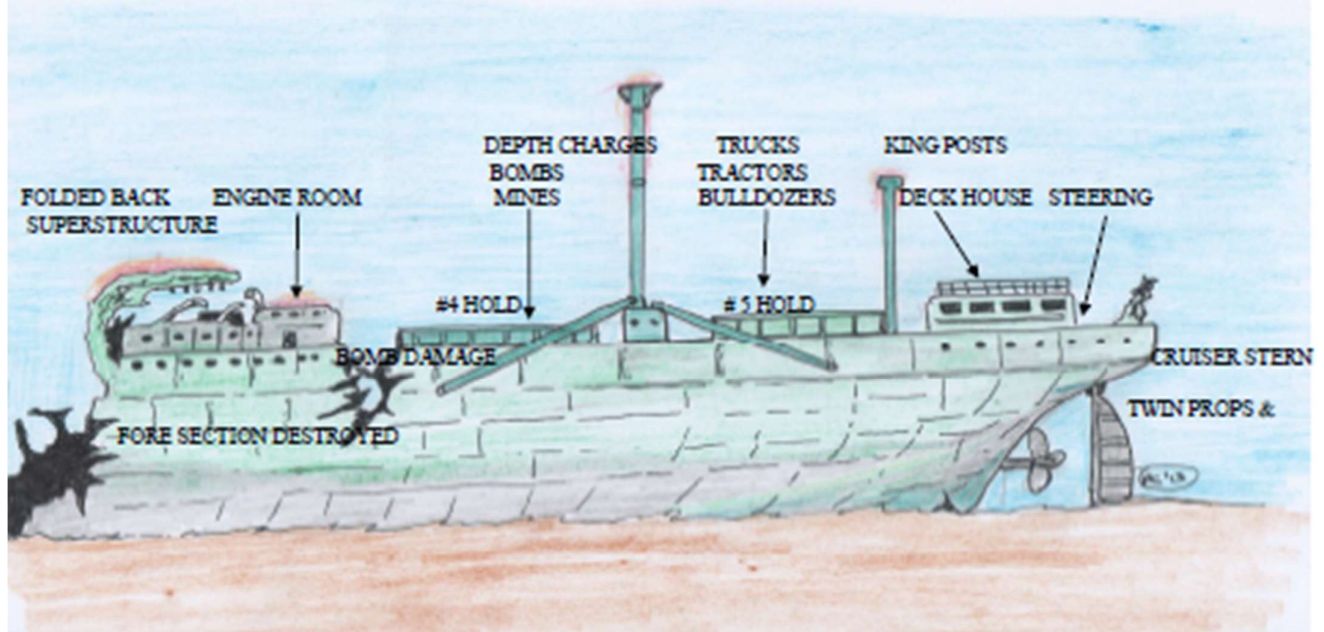
Heavy plant including this bulldozer lie in the holds of the Hoki Maru.

A huge 450ft, 700 ton ship, built in New Zealand. Her aft holds contain heavy plant equipment destined for airfield construction and include bull dozers and a steam roller. Forward of the huge devastation the bow and fo'c'sle lie intact. The upper sections of the upright stern are covered in superb corals. A pair of eagle rays frequents the wreck, providing an impressive fly by. Today only the aft section remains, testimony to the devastating explosion



One of the intriguing aspects of this wreck is the Fassey Ferguson (British) tractors on board. This leads to speculation that she was a captured merchantman. Her holds are one of the highlights of a Truk Tour. Due to the depths this is a decompression dive. She lies to the southwest of Dublon with a cluster of other wrecks sitting in the fourth fleet anchorage when the attack began.

Hoki Maru Stern Section



HOKUYO MARU

The Hokuyo Maru was built in 1937, by the Uraga Dockyard Senryu as a medium coastal freighter for the Kita Nikon Kisen Line. Displacement: 4,217 tons, Length: 354 feet, Beam: 50 feet, Engine: 1 low pressure steam turbine coal fired. Max Speed: 15.85 kts.



She was designed to operate between North Korea, Hokkaido and other Japanese islands and as a result had a very strong bow to penetrate ice flows.

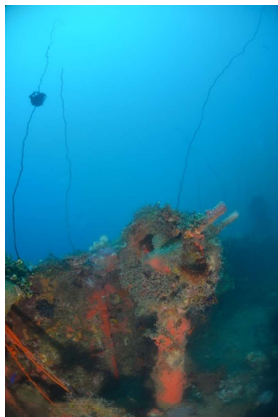
During the “Hailstone” attack, Hokuyo Maru was attacked by aircraft from the carrier Essex and sunk by a bomb that struck her starboard aft side of 3rd hold. The subsequent explosion blew out a closely adjacent

starboard boiler leaving twin gaping holes in both the hold and boiler room. She sits upright with an intact housework and funnel and is a very enjoyable, but deep dive, now lying on a 200 fsw floor.

THE WRECK TODAY.

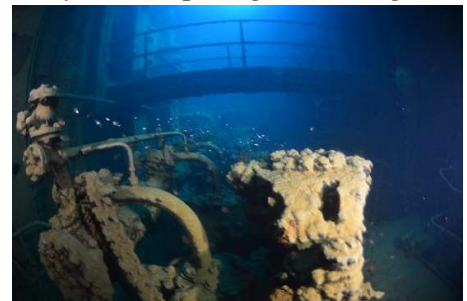
One of the deeper wrecks in the lagoon, with her keel in 64 mtrs of water, the top of the superstructure lies in 39 mtrs-her for and aft masts, and here kingpost pair stand proud and are covered in life- worth noting for those all important deep stops and slow accents.

Unusually her fo’c’ssle show no sign of a gun mount, only her anchor winch, with the starboard anchor still stowed. Inside the foc’s’le is the lamp room and several still remain. The forward holds are deep at 55mtrs and a almost empty, Her mast and cross tee tower up above between the holds.



Docking telegraph

The superstructure centrally placed is gutted by fire exposing her navigation instruments are exposed. The engine room can be accessed from the rear of the lower room under the navigation deck, or through the skylights aft of the funnel, where several vents are in the open position, and is similar in size and style to the Kenshu- but must deeper! All her instrumentation is intact- gauges ,valves workshops with tools a lathe and stores. Even light bulbs remain.



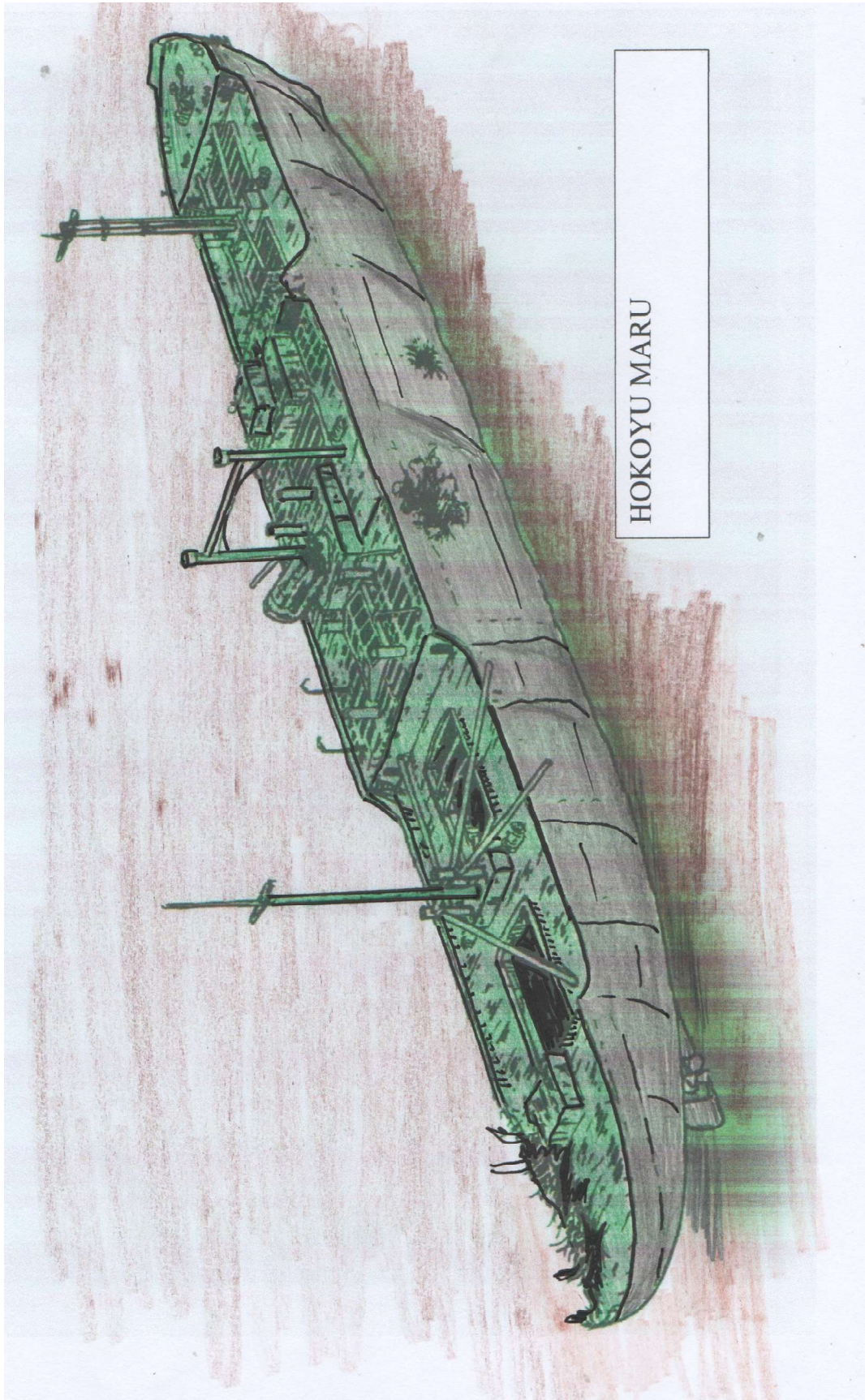
engine room

The aft holds are buckled and show signs of bomb damage, which extends to the poop deck. The rudder and single prop are partially buried . The aft mast rises high, covered in coral and

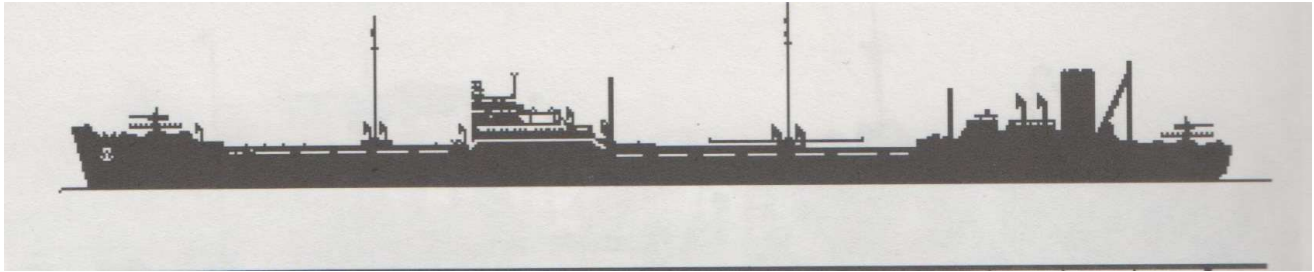


a god route back to the surface. Lots of invertebrate life to observe during deep stops.





HOYO MARU



15

October 1935:Yokohama. Laid down at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries shipyard as a 8691-ton merchant tanker for Nippon Shosen K. K. of Tokyo. 475ft long, 6 cylinder diesel engine, 19 knots

January 1937:Ariake Bay, Kyushu. On her second voyage HOYO MARU runs aground in stormy weather off Tanegajima and her hull is heavily damaged. She is salvaged and repaired by Asano Shipyard in Kanagawa Prefecture.

25 December 1940:Requisitioned by the IJN and registered as a Converted Merchant Transport (Oil Supply) in the Kure Naval District.

17 January 1942: - Operation "R" - The Invasions of Rabaul and Kavieng: Vice Admiral (Admiral, posthumously) Nagumo Chuichi's (36) Carrier Striking Force's CarDiv 1's AKAGI and KAGA, CruDiv 5's SHOKAKU and ZUIKAKU, BatDiv 3/1 HIEI and KIRISHIMA, CruDiv 8's TONE and CHIKUMA and DesRon 1's light cruiser ABUKUMA with DesDiv 17's ISOKAZE, URAKAZE, TANIKAZE, HAMAKAZE, DesDiv 18's ARARE, KASUMI, KAGERO, SHIRANUHI and unattached destroyer AKIGUMO depart Truk.

CruDiv 18's TENRYU and TATSUTA also depart Truk with oiler GOYO MARU and troop transports KINRYU and AZUMASAN MARUs escorted by DesRon 6's light cruiser YUBARI and DesDiv 23's KIKUZUKI, UZUKI and YUZUKI. They are screened by CruDiv 6's AOBA, KINUGASA, KAKO and FURUTAKA, minelayers TSUGARU and OKINOSHIMA and CarDiv 11's seaplane carrier CHITOSE.

20 January 1942: N of New Ireland. CarDivs 1 and 5 launch 100 bombers and fighters to attack Rabaul, New Britain and Kavieng, New Ireland. That evening, CarDiv 5 is detached and moves to a position in the Bismarck Sea.

21 January 1942: At 1200 HOYO MARU departs Yokosuka in support of the Operation "R" Naval Force escorted by auxiliary gunboat KASAGI MARU. That same day, CarDiv 1 launches another strike on Rabaul and CarDiv 5 launches attacks on Madang, Lae and Salamaua, New Guinea. After CarDiv 5 recovers her aircraft, she departs the Bismarck Sea area that evening to rendezvous with CarDiv 1.

4 May 1942: Operation "MO" – The Invasion of Tulagi and Port Moresby: Departs Rabaul in Rear Admiral Abe Koso's Transport Force of five Navy, six Army transports, oilers HOYO and GOYO MARUs, IRO, Steams towards Jomard Pass in the Louisiade Archipelago to an area off Misima Island.

21 September 1942: Damaged during a bombing attack. Returns to Japan.

6

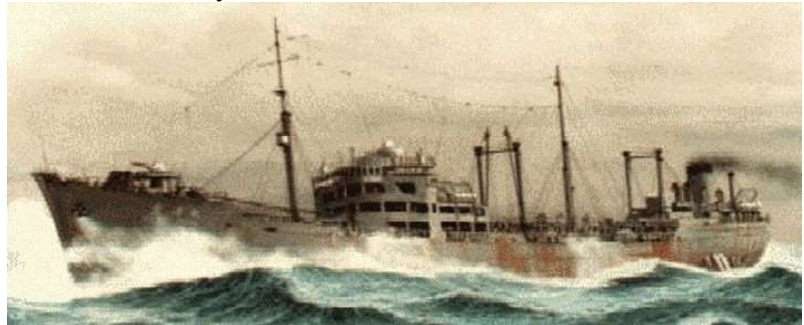
November

1943:

Near Orolup Island. Auxiliary Minelayer KINJO MARU joins as escort.

Ysabel Channel, off New Ireland, Bismarcks. At 0200, the convoy is attacked by LtCdr (later Rear Admiral) Roy M. Davenport's (USNA '33) USS HADDOCK (SS-231) in a surface radar attack at 07-54N, 150-06E. Davenport fires six torpedoes at HOYO and GENYO MARUs from 3,000 yards. He then swings around and fires his four stern torpedoes at YAKAZE from about 4,000 yards.

The convoy switches on searchlights and opens fire. Davenport pulls off, reloads and about an hour later makes a second attack. He fires his last four torpedoes from 3,000 yards, two at each oiler, and claims sinking both. Actually, HOYO MARU is hit in the stern, engine damaged and set afire. She floods and settles by the stern. HOYO MARU's Captain Hojo Rinsaburo orders her abandoned, but stays aboard with about a dozen crewmen.



Later, YAKAZE rescues 90 crewmembers including Captain Hojo. At 1130, light cruiser NAGARA arrives. At 1710, she reports the fires aboard HOYO MARU have been put out.

10 November 1943: Arrives at Truk where repair ship AKASHI provides emergency repairs. The ship remains under repairs up until the time of her sinking.

7 February 1944: HOYO MARU is assigned to the Fourth Fleet's Inner South Seas Force.

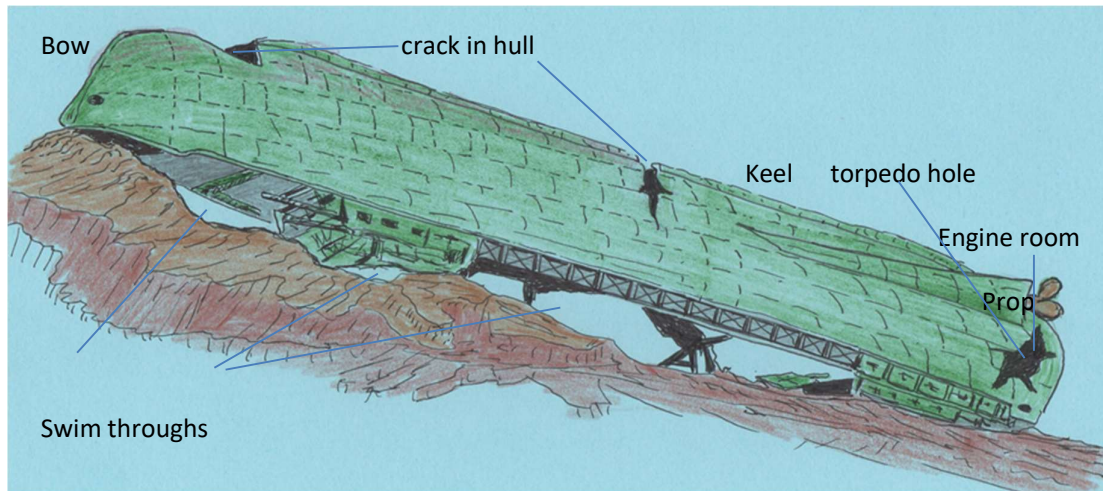
17 February 1944: E of Fenfan Island. HOYO MARU is anchored in the Repair Anchorage. In the second strike that afternoon, Douglas SBD "Dauntless" dive-bombers the USS ENTERPRISE (CV-6) attack HOYO MARU. She is hit by 1,000-lb GP bombs aft of the bridge on the starboard side and another forward of the aft superstructure near her previously damaged stern and set afire. Six crewmen are KIA.

HOYO MARU capsizes and sinks. She comes to rest upside down in the sand at about 80 feet on her midship superstructure and breaks in two. A section of her keel and screw are visible above water.



THE WRECK TODAY; The upturned hull is totally covered in coral and the wreck lies on a slope from 12ft down to 75 ft. Although capsized, much of the superstructure can be explored by divers with no clear surface/ cave diving experience. There is a split in the hull aft of amidships, but this is just access to a fuel hold. Access to her engine room, which is situated aft is via a hole in the stern- caused by the torpedo blast. Although the engine has fallen from its mounting there is still much to explore with many machines and control panels in view. A torch is essential. Everything is upside down! Her huge prop is still in place, and her pipe bridge walkway runs from the aft superstructure to the bridge area. This is

a large wreck and requires several dives simply to orientate yourself. Line out reels are essential too! Swimming forward, along her starboard side (it will be on your right! And the depths will decrease) there are more swim throughs into the bridge superstructure and fo'c'sle. Due to the reduced visibility and advanced nature of penetration this wreck is rarely visited. A good reason to dive her. Lies close to Fetan Island.



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I-169 SUBMARINE(Shinohara)

A type 6A class submarine.

22 December 1931:Laid down at Mitsubishi's Kobe Yard.AS 169.a Type 6A kaidai submarine,336 ft long, 27 ft beam,1400tons, diesel (Kanpon) and electric engines,6 21"

2tubes,14 torpedoes , armed with a 3.9 deck gun, range 14000 miles, crew of 68.

28 September 1935:Kobe. I-69 is completed and attached to Kure Naval District. Assigned to SubDiv 12.



November	1941:	Operation	"Z":
I-69 is assigned to Vice Admiral Shimizu Mitsumi's Advanced Expeditionary Force (Sixth Fleet) in Rear Admiral (later Vice Admiral) Miwa Shigeyoshi's SubRon 3 in Captain Nakaoka Nobuki's SubDiv 12 with I-68 and I-70.			

11	November	1941:
I-69 departs Saeki with ComSubDiv 12, Captain Nakaoka embarked on her first war patrol in company with the I-68, I-70, I-71, I-72 and I-73.		

23	November	1941:
Departs Kwajalein.		

2 December 1941:The coded signal "Niitakayama nobore (Climb Mt. Niitaka) 1208" is received from the Combined Fleet. It signifies that hostilities will commence on 8 December (Japan time).

7	December	1941:	The	Attack	on	Pearl	Harbour:
I-69 and I-68 are ordered to lay off the entrance to Pearl Harbour to rescue midget submarine crews. At 2101, Lt Cdr Watanabe witnesses "a massive explosion in Pearl Harbour. There are several explosions, followed by high columns of fire (probably a detonating warship magazine). This must have been some capital ship sunk by our midget submarines".							

Later that night, I-69 locates a destroyer SSE of Barbers Point and fires a torpedo at her. The destroyer probably spots the wake because she turns away. I-69 is depth-charged.

8 December 1941:I-69 and I-68 lay off Pearl Harbour awaiting midget submarine crews, but none return.

9 December 1941:S of Oahu, Hawaii. I-69 attacks a cargo ship unsuccessfully, then is depth-charged.

Off Barber's Point, Hawaii. I-69 entangles herself in an anti-submarine net. Lt Cdr Watanabe's crew struggles for hours and finally breaks free, but damages a periscope. After remaining submerged about 39 hours, all hopes of rescuing shot-down aircrews are abandoned.

8 February 1942:Around 1805 I-69 surfaces less than 1,000 yards S of the mouth of Brooks Channel and targets the radio station on Sand Island with her 10-cm deck gun. One of her shells strikes a concrete ammunition magazine. The 5-inch "A" battery returns fire from ashore, forcing the submarine to dive after three rounds are fired.

10 February 1942: Off Midway. Around 1758 I-69 again surfaces S of the mouth of Brooks Channel in a second attempt to shell Sand Island, but is spotted by two Marine F2A-3 Brewster "Buffaloes" of VMF-221 patrolling overhead. Two rounds are fired before 1/Lt John F. Carey and his wingman 2/Lt Philip R. White drop their bombs on the submarine, both scoring near misses. I-69 is also briefly strafed before submerging. I-69 is renumbered I-169.

75 miles SE of Nouméa, New Caledonia. I-169 torpedoes the 9,227-ton Dutch freighter TJINEGARA, operated by the U.S. Army as a troopship. She is en route from Rockhampton, Queensland to Nouméa. TJINEGARA sinks after several hits at 23-18S, 165-25E.

15 February 1944:Lt Shinohara Shigeo is appointed the CO.

17-18 February 1944: American Operation "Hailstone" - The Attack on Truk Lagoon: Task Force 58's five fleet carriers and four light carriers, supported by six battleships, ten cruisers and 28 destroyers, launch air attacks on Japanese ships in the lagoon, airfields and shore installations. They sink 31 transports and 10 naval vessels (two cruisers, four destroyers and four auxiliary vessels), destroy nearly 200 aircraft and damage severely about 100 more.

22 March 1944: I-169 Returns to Truk.

4 April 1944: NW of Dublon Island, Truk. I-169 is replenishing supplies at her anchorage in the lagoon. In addition to her crew some workmen are also aboard, but the CO and 20 other sailors are at Dublon.

About 0900 (JST) an air raid warning is issued. The watch officer orders I-169 to dive immediately, although most deck hatches are still open. I-169 submerges to avoid the first wave of PB4Y "Liberator" bombers. Since the main induction valve is not secured, the aft compartments flood immediately despite a desperate attempt to re-surface.

The submarine settles in 125 feet of water. The rest of the crew seals off the flooded area. After the raid, an unsuccessful attempt is made to contact I-169. Only then is it realized that she is in trouble. A diver is sent down who contacts the survivors, tapping on the hull.

5 April 1944: Headquarters, Sixth Fleet issues an order to rescue the survivors. A repair ship with a 30-ton crane and tug FUTAGAMI are dispatched to hoist the bow to the surface. At first, they fail to locate the submarine. Once they find her they attempt a lift, but the flooded submarine is too heavy and the crane's cable snaps.

Tapping comes only from the aft compartment. Air hoses are lowered and holes are drilled in the ballast tanks, but it is impossible to signal the crew to open the air valves to the ballast tanks. By 2300 hours, there are no further responses from the entombed crew. All suffocate. Night bombing raids interrupt further investigation. Lt Shinohara, who was not aboard, survives the sinking. Later, the Japanese informally name I-169 the "Shinohara".

April 1944: In the next weeks, 32 bodies are recovered from the forward compartments.

17 April 1944: At 2232, USN codebreakers intercept and decrypt a message that reads: "Interim report about the I-169 incident. 1. The bodies of the Army officers have been recovered and the causes of the accident have been investigated. It is regrettably the case that, as far as can be seen, the hatchway and outboard ---- were closed, but the cover of the engine room was left open. Compressed air was driven thence through the storm ventilator ----. Through some mistake or other the flood - controller there was left open, for that reason ---- [blanks] --- the engine room and after torpedo compartment hatchway was open."

May 1944: With the threat of invasion imminent, the wreck is bombarded with depth charges to prevent the submarine's technology from falling into American hands. The bow and conning tower are heavily damaged by the depth charges.

August

1973:

The remains and personal effects of I-169's crew are returned to Japan where they are cremated as part of Shinto rites. I-169's bell is displayed at the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo.

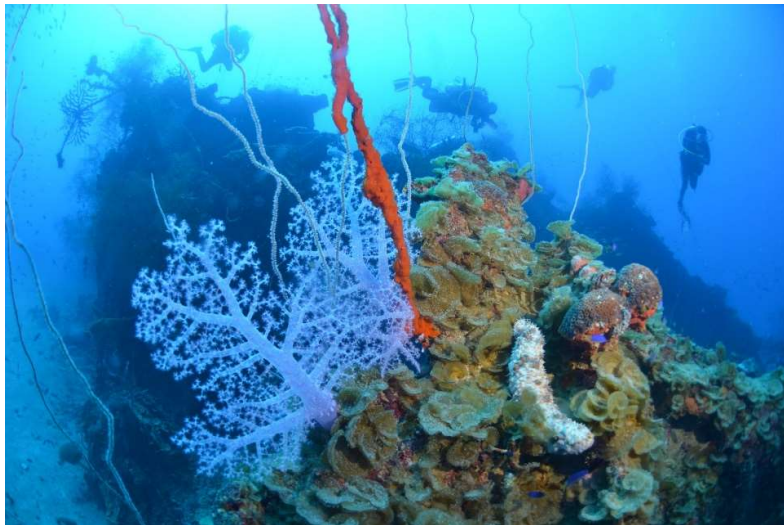
THE WRECK TODAY; The wreck lies bow up in 32 mtrs, stern down on a slope with the prop at 43 mtrs.

The bow, conning and stern have been badly damaged by the subsequent depth charging. The props lie partially buried in the sand, and the wooden deck has all but gone, exposing the hull through the deck framework. The aft deck is otherwise intact and features the rear hatch and a tripod flagstaff. The conning lies blasted over to port but the periscopes and deck gun can be spotted amidst the jumbled wreckage. Her torpedo tubes can still be seen in the forward jumbled wreckage.





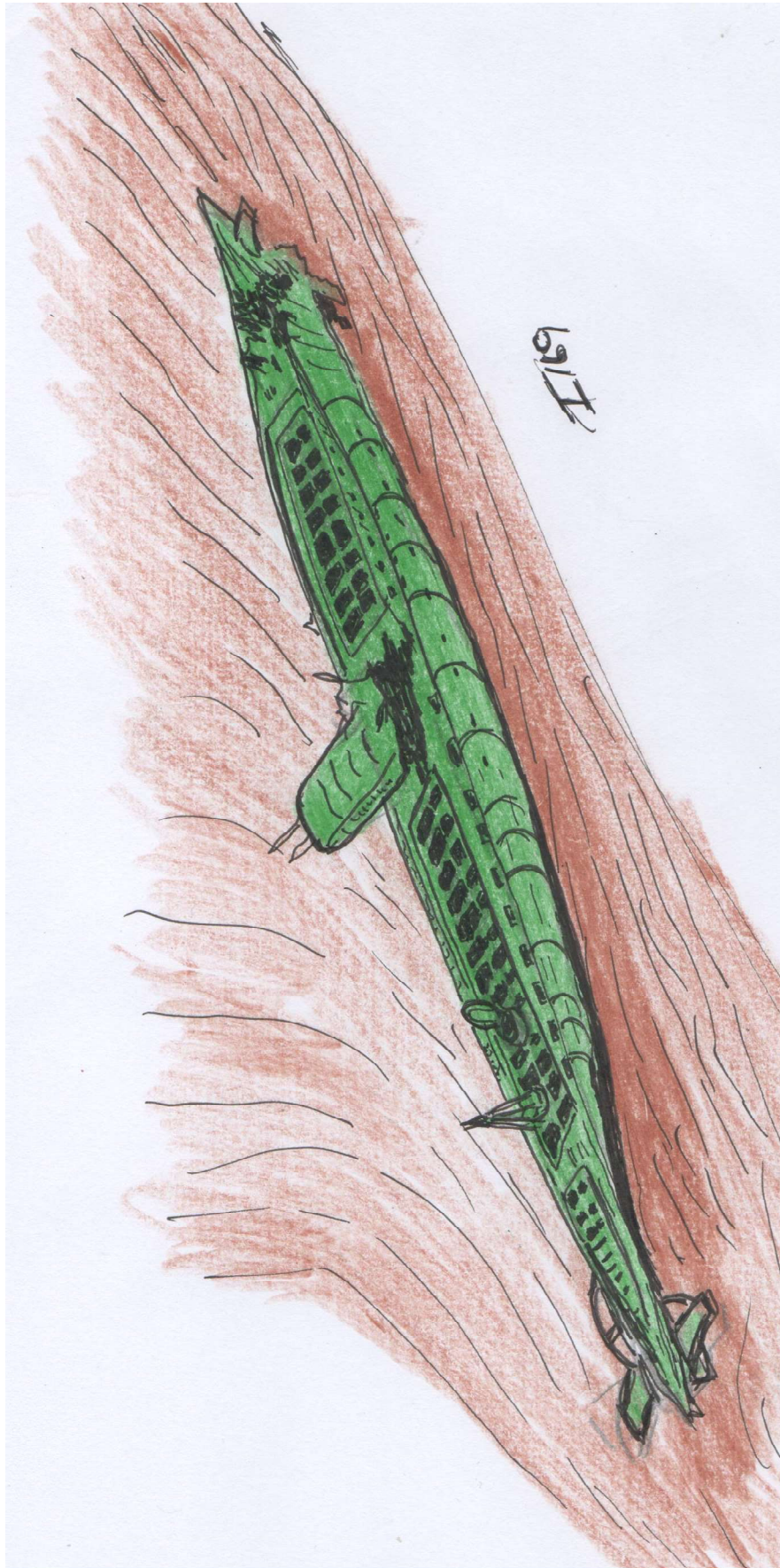
One of her twin props



corals have totally covered the hull



open hatch



KATSURAGISAN MARU

THE SHIP; Built 20 June 1925:Tama. Mitsui Bussan Zosensho, K. K. Laid down as Yard No. 103, a 2,428-ton cargo ship for Mitsui Bussan Kaisha (Steamship Co.), K. K.

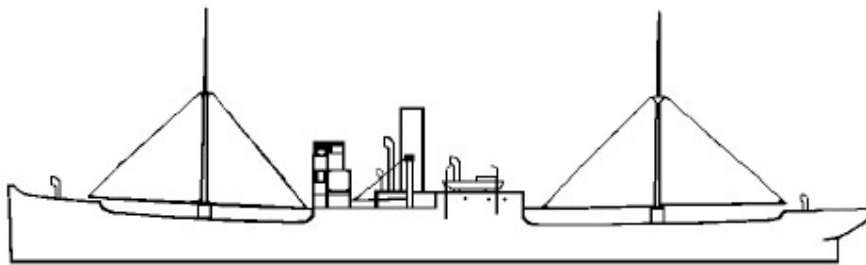
29 December 1924:Launched and named KATSURAGISAN MARU

25 June 1942: KATSURAGISAN MARU departs Tokyo for Ominato, northern Honshu in an unnumbered convoy also consisting of cargo/transport FUKUEI, HEIWA, NORWAY and SEIKAI MARUs escorted by destroyer OKIKAZE.

17 December 1943: KATSURAGISAN MARU is requisitioned by the Imperial Navy (IJN)

25 December 1943: At 0700, KATSURAGISAN MARU departs Yokosuka for Truk in convoy No. 3225

6 January 1944: Arrives at Truk, At 0513, entering the NE Channel into Truk, KATSURAGISAN MARU strikes a defensive mine and sinks. Five crewmen KIA.



THE WRECK TODAY;

One of the least dived and most difficult to execute, she sits in an open channel(north east channel) swept by strong currents and a very healthy population of sharks. She sits in 70 mtrs with her deck at 62 mtrs and her superstructure at 50 mtrs. Her location affords the best visibility in Truk.



Upright with a slight slope She has a raised fo'c'sle with both her anchors still stowed and a winch on deck. The usual storage area sits below accessed by doors port and starboard. The foremast has fallen across the forward hold , which contains mesh matting (for airfield construction) tyres and gas masks .The deck is littered with mast head lanterns. Number two hold contains more building materials coils of wire and electrical equipment covered in a red sea squirt



What's left of the superstructure is a skeletal collapsed framework- the crews quarters separated from the engine room casing by a companionway (reminiscent of the Rosalie Moller in the Red Sea) stat and her engine house skylights have collapsed revealing her steam engine. The funnel too has fallen over and collapsed and bears the shipping line markings. Her galley can be found aft of the main superstructure and crockery still remains.



one of 5 trucks found in the holds

The aft holds contain perhaps the most interesting aspects of her cargo- Toyota and Nissan trucks and a staff car . The staff car is a KUROGANE.Type 95 built by Tokyu Kurogane Industries.



The stern castle sports a gun deck with a 3 inch gun still on its mount although the wooden planking has disappeared, ever the less a striking image. Below is her emergency steering helm. The damage from the mine is

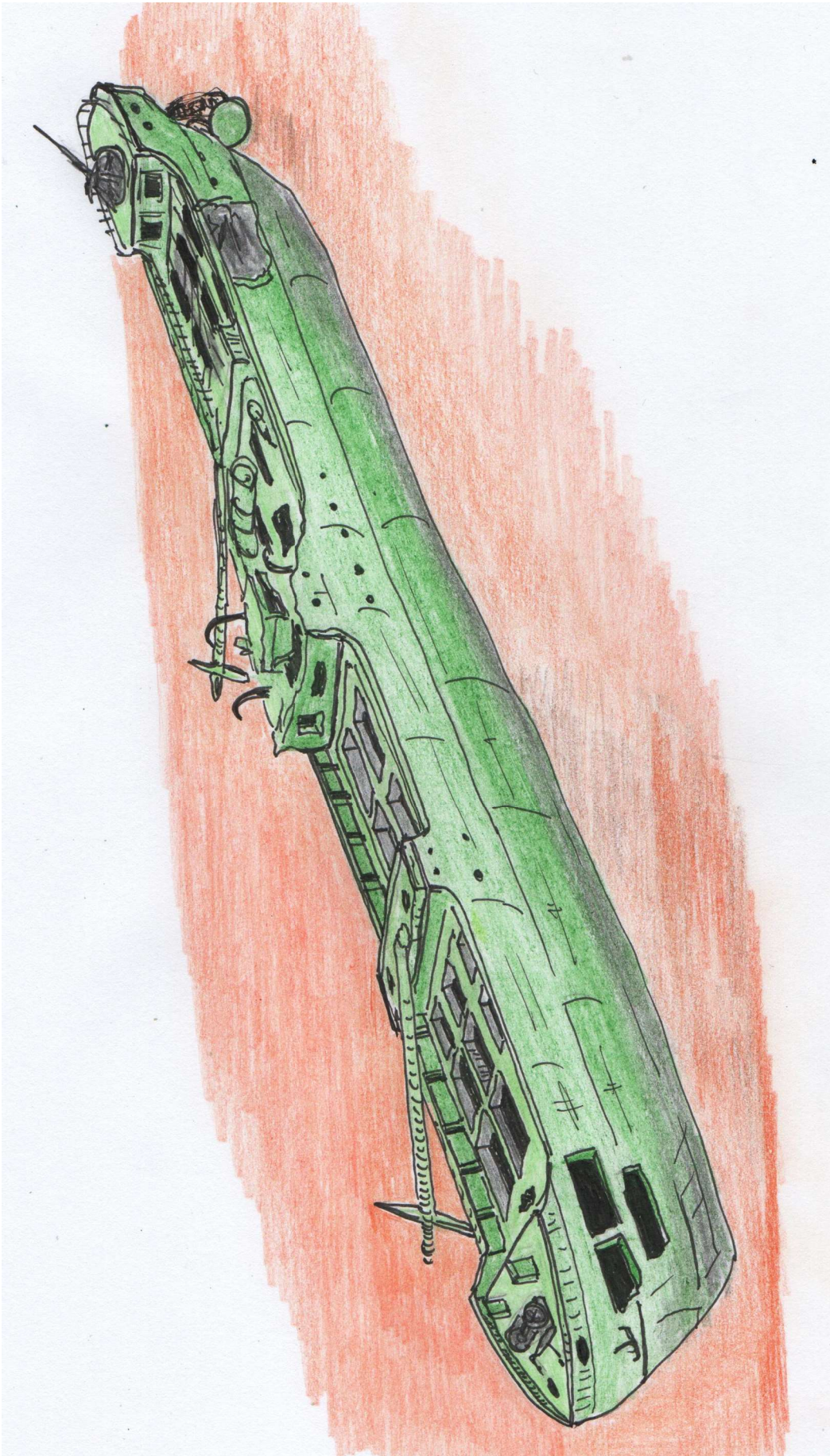


Steering mechanism in the lower stern section

quite evident with much of the aft hull destroyed around the starboard side.



The stern gun, mounted on its pedestal, showing it's framework due to the lack of the wooden floor



KENSHU MARU



THE SHIP;8 February 1938:Tama. Laid down by Tama Zosensho K.K. shipyard for Inui Kisen K.K. as a 4,861-tons cargo ship.

30 June 1938:Launched and named KENSHO MARU.

30 August 1938:Completed and registered in Kobe.

14 September 1940:Requisitioned by the IJN as general requisitioned transport (Ippan Choyosen) and attached to the Yokosuka Naval District.

15 October 1941:Registered in the IJN as an auxiliary transport, (Otsu) category and attached to the Yokosuka Naval District with Yokosuka as homeport under internal order

At 0800, departs Kwajalein with auxiliary subchaser TAMA MARU No. 5, that escorted the ship to 08-30N 163-00E.

19 December 1943:At 1400, arrives at Kwajalein. At 2244, SHOEI MARU is hit and heavily damaged in a major air attack on the Atoll.

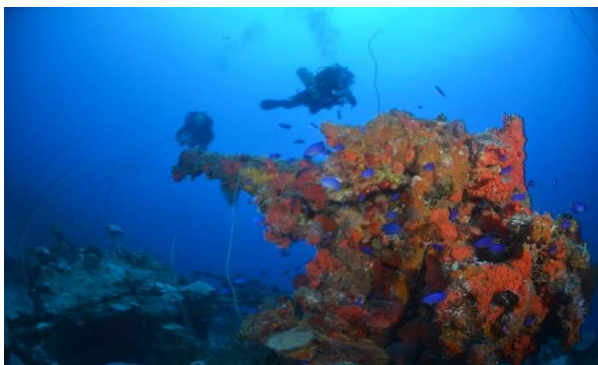
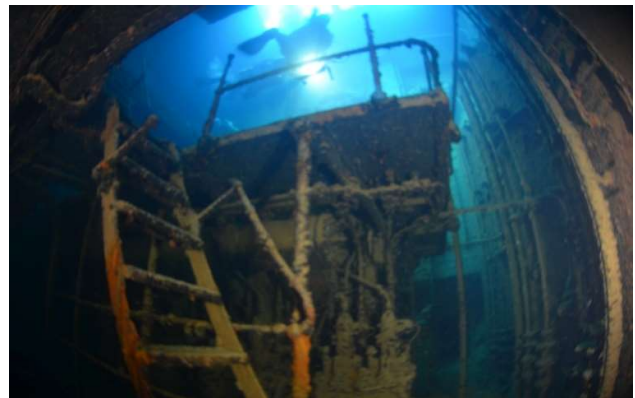
20 December 1943:SHOEI MARU sinks. Later that day, in another airstrike by 16 Consolidated B-24 "Liberators", KENSHO MARU is hit by bombs and heavily damaged and unnavigable.

4 February 1944:Arrives at Truk.Undergoes repairs in Truk's Repair Anchorage located W of Dublon and N of Fefan Islands.

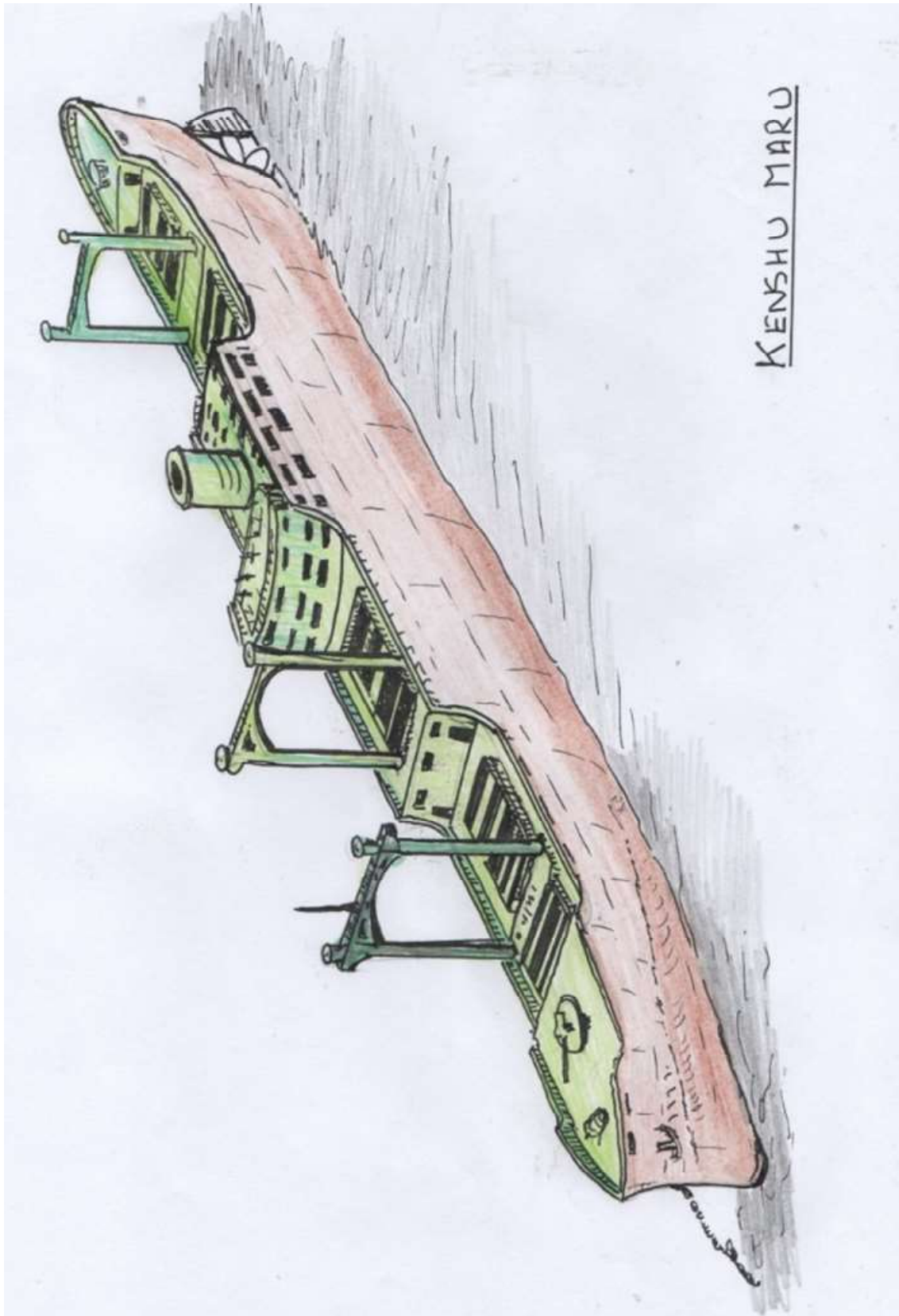
17 February 1944. Still under repairs, KENSHO MARU is hit by torpedoes and bombs and sinks at 07-23N, 151-51E taking down six of her crew.

THE WRECK TODAY;A 384ft, 4860 ton, passenger cargo ship, sunk by torpedo amidships. This is a beautiful shipwreck, and arguably one of the best wrecks in the lagoon. It sits upright on the seabed with all her kingposts, and many air scoops standing proudly upright covered in an amazing variety of life. The steering room is a must, the hole in the stern allows for easy access/exit. Superb swim throughs of the accommodation block at deck level with additional access points into her amazing engine room. This boasts

3 floors of workshops, tool rooms and is totally intact right down to her valves gauges and instruments. It is worthy of a dive in its own right. She is a typical five hold freighter, although her holds have little of interest and like many other wrecks demands several dives to even get a feel for the wreck. She lies west of Dublon Island.







KIYOSUMI MARU



THE SHIP

30 May 1933: Kobe. Laid down at Kawasaki's dockyard.

30 June 1934: Launched and named [KIYOSUMI MARU](#).

5 October 1934: Completed as a 6,991-ton cargo-passenger ship for Kokusai Kisen K. K. of Tokyo. She was 453 ft long, 60ft beam and 40ft draught. Single screw driven by a Mitsubishi-Sulzer diesel engine

30 October 1934 - 30 October 1941:

Chartered by the Nippon Yusen K. K. Line. Completes cargo-passenger runs between Kobe and New York for the next seven years. Ports of call include Singapore, Manila, Penang, Los Angeles, Panama Canal, New York, Baltimore, New Orleans, Galveston, Yokohama and Moji.



5 September 1941: Rear Admiral-Retired (Vice Admiral, posthumously) Okamura Masao (38) is posted as the Commanding Officer. Okamura simultaneously assumes joint command of AIKOKU MARU.

1 November 1941: Requisitioned by the IJN.

7 November 1941: Assigned directly to the Combined Fleet in Rear Admiral (later Vice Admiral) Takeda Moriji's (38th) (former CO of ASHIGARA) 24th Squadron (Raider) with AIKOKU and HOKOKU MARUs.

1 December 1941:

Registered in the Kure Naval District. Arrives at Osaka. Begins conversion to an 8,613-ton armed merchant cruiser. Eight 150-mm (5.9-inch) single mount guns, two 13.5-mm machine guns, two 533-mm (21-inch) torpedo tubes are fitted. She carries one Type 94 Kawanishi E7K2 "Alf" reconnaissance floatplane..



3 June 1942:

The convoy is bombed by nine Boeing B-17 "Flying Fortresses". Later, the convoy is also attacked by three torpedo-carrying Consolidated PBY "Catalina" amphibious patrol planes. Oiler AKEBONO MARU is hit in the bow and KIYOSUMI MARU is strafed. Eight men of the embarked Kure SNLF are wounded.

24 September, 1942:

Departs Belawan, Sumatra for Rabaul a convoy consisting of three armed merchant cruisers carrying elements of the IJA's 38th and 230th Infantry Divisions including the 1st Echelon of the 38th Division (division headquarters and the 230th Infantry, a company of 75mm mountain artillery, and a company of engineers) and the 2nd Echelon, 2nd Division (1st and 3rd Battalions, 16th Infantry). KIYOSUMI MARU carries 2,931 men of the 38th Division.

20 September 1943: KIYOSUMI MARU carries 1,300 men of the 17th Division's 53rd Infantry Regiment including the regimental commander and 170 vehicles and 2,800 cubic meters of supplies.

HEIAN MARU embarks the CO of the 17th Infantry Division, 1,900 of his men, lead engineer troops and 240 wheeled vehicles. She also carries 900 cubic meters of supplies and a cargo of torpedoes. GOKOKU MARU carries 1,850 men. AKITSUSHIMA carries 500 men including the brigade commander, 10 vehicles and 400 cubic meters of supplies.

21 October 1943:

KIYOSUMI MARU departs Shanghai as the second echelon of convoy "Tei No. 4" (T4-GO Transportation Strategy) also consisting of troop transport GOKOKU MARU escorted by light cruisers NAKA and ISUZU and destroyer YAMAGUMO. KIOSUMI MARU carries 1,342 men of the IJA's 17th Division including two companies, 81st Infantry 3rd Battalion (minus 8th Company), 23rd Field Artillery Equipment platoon and 17th Engineer Regiment.

3 November 1943: 60 miles N of Kavieng. The convoy is attacked by 19 B-24 "Liberator" bombers of the USAAF 13th Air Force. NAKA suffers a near-miss. KIOSUMI MARU is damaged. ISUZU takes her in tow to Kavieng. At 1145, USN codebreakers intercept and decrypt a message that reads: As a result of bombing by 19 large-type enemy planes, KIOSUMI's engine room is flooded and she is unable to navigate. Position 151-30E, 02-00S. At 1715, the codebreakers decrypt another message that reads: ISUZU commenced towing KIOSUMI MARU at 1500 escorted by NAKA and ISOKAZE---."

4 November 1943: Destroyer MINAZUKI departs Kavieng to assist KIOSUMI MARU. Destroyer ISOKAZE and light cruiser YUBARI also assist.

YUBARI removes 196 troops and three field guns from KIOSUMI MARU. ISUZU removes 196 troops and four regimental guns and NAKA removes another 166 men and four rapid fire antitank guns the transport. Destroyer MINAZUKI removes 267 troops from the transport and ISOKAZE removes 236 troops and two mountain guns. All the troops are landed at Rabaul. Ammunition and supplies are also off loaded from KIOSUMI MARU. Later, KIOSUMI MARU is towed to Kavieng.

25 December 1943: Aircraft from Rear Admiral Frederick C. Sherman's TG 50.2's BUNKER HILL (CV-17) and MONTEREY (CVL-26) attack and sink transport TENRYU MARU and set KIOSUMI MARU afire. KIOSUMI MARU undergoes emergency repairs.

30 December 1943: Departs Kavieng for Truk with destroyer YUKAZE and minesweeper W-22.

31 December 1943: 400 km N of the Admiralty Islands. LtCdr Cryrus C. Cole's USS BALAO (SS-285) sights KIOSUMI MARU and begins tracking her on the surface.

1 January 1944: SW of Truk, Carolines. At 2345, LtCdr Cole fires six bow torpedoes at KIOSUMI MARU at 04-35N, 147-15E. Three hit and disable the ship and flood her forward hold.

NAKA arrives from Truk that same day and takes KIOSUMI MARU in tow.

2 January 1944: Destroyer TANIKAZE departs Truk to assist NAKA tow KIOSUMI MARU to Truk.

Light cruiser OYODO and destroyer AKIZUKI also arrive and provide escort. Auxiliary minelayer KINJO MARU also joins damaged KIOSUMI MARU at 04-35N, 146-30E.

NAKA and TANIKAZE arrive at Truk with the KIOSUMI MARU under tow. KIOSUMI MARU begins repairs.

17-18 February 1944: Fefan Island, Truk. KIOSUMI MARU is in the Repair Anchorage. At 0900, Douglas SBD-5 "Dauntless" dive-bombers from YORKTOWN attack and score a direct hit in hold No. 2. At about 1330, SDBs from ENTERPRISE also attack and hit both sides of her bridge with bombs. Forty-three crewmen are killed. KIOSUMI MARU sinks as a result of torpedo damage and bomb hits. She comes to rest on her port side at a depth of 120 feet.



THE WRECK TODAY; This is a huge wreck lying on its side with impressive masts and kingposts running their full length horizontally and covered in huge coral trees and swarms of reef fishes. For the photographer these can be a dive in thier own right. The upper side of the ship is in only 12 mtrs and is a veritable coral reef.

The bow is very impressive with both anchors and a raised foc'sle-The gun platform remains but her huge gun is missing. Inside the store area below is the lamp room where many lamps still remain.

Huge empty holds lie forward of the superstructure, and between the holds a mast house acts as a base for the foremast which reaches out horizontally. A huge gaping hole opens out to her keel through the holds.

The superstructure has all but been destroyed, but through the confusion of plates girders and cables access to her amazing engine room can be gained. There are five levels into the engine room with walkways



forming a framework and all the engine workings can be seen- electical control panels, valves gauges, all covered in a golden concretion, allowing for some challenging photo opportunities.

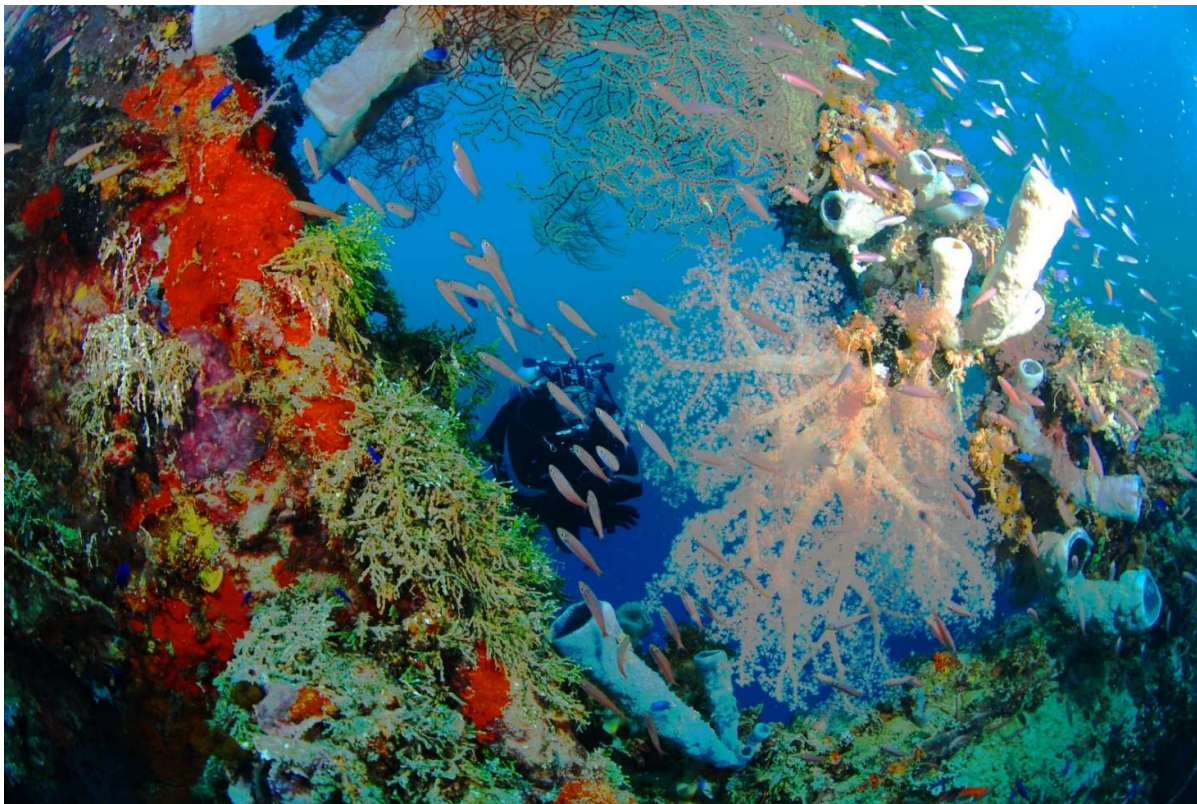


Her huge engine hangs horizontally and it is possible to swim right round although this involves accents and descents. This perhaps one of the most exciting engine rooms in the entire fleet, albeit 90 degrees out of canter. Strong sunlight creates a rea-assuring backdrop- aiding to a sense of direction and a way out. There is much to see, and the kind depths allow for long and stunning journeys through her power house. Even light bulbs remain in their holders

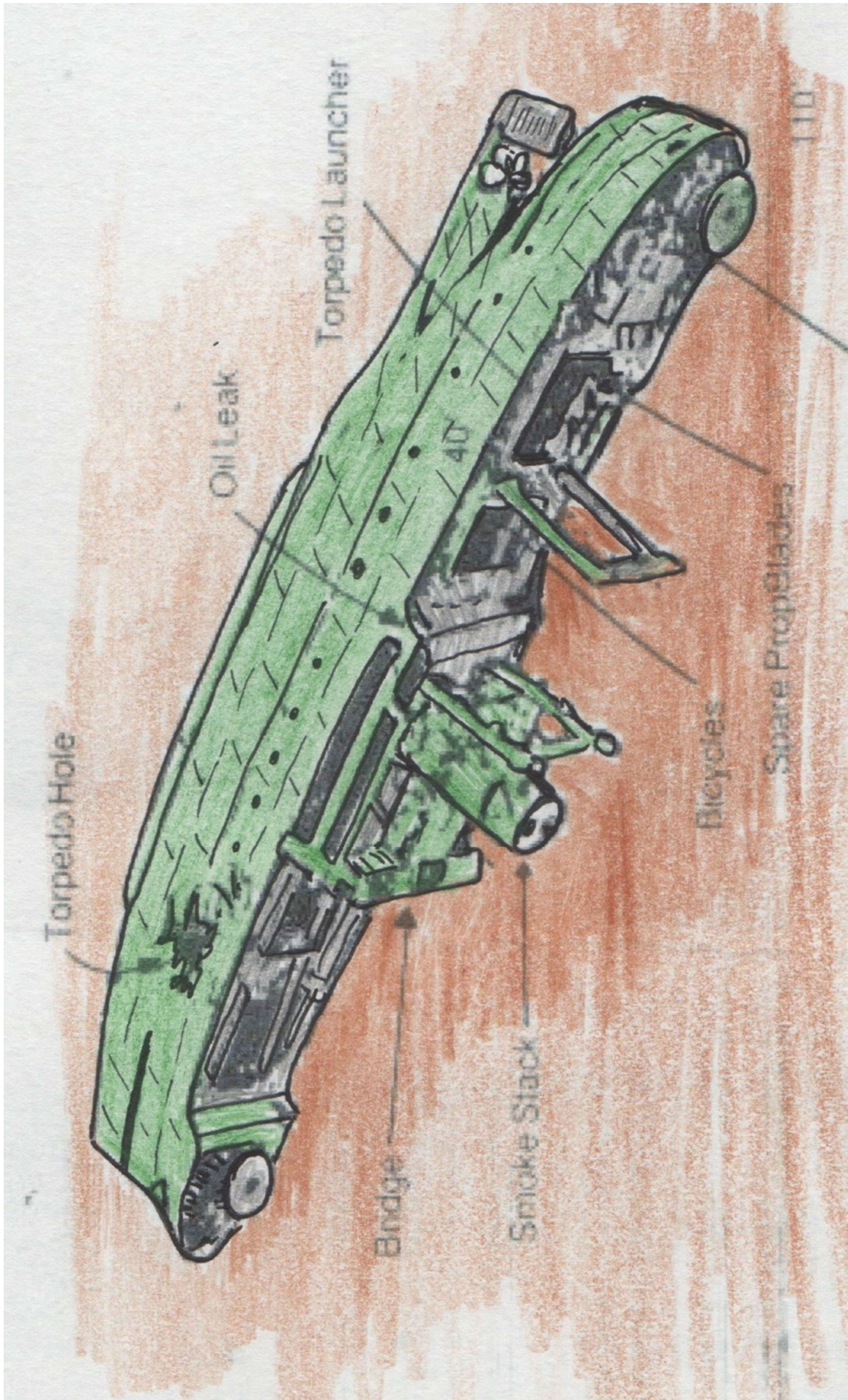


The aft holds are again huge but empty, Hold #5 having swivel torpedo launchers flanking the hold. and #6 has numerous fuel drums lying piled up on the deeper hold wall. Again a kingpost protrudes horizontally out into the gloom- adorned with huge hanging coral bushes harbouring a multitude of fish life, which attracts large numbers of jacks. The stern castle is large and contains the steering quadrant, steering mechanisms, and externally is her huge single prop and rudder. Externally this wreck is an absolute

aquarium and one of the largest wrecks in the lagoon- worthy of repeat dives. She lies between Fetan and Dublon



A scene that typifies the shipwrecks of Truk-intact interior museums of a naval life, while outside the invader has been duly invaded by nature. In stark contrast to the Red Sea Wrecks, the wrecks of Truk seem to withstand the test of time and remain in true form. Possibly aided by the coral structures which seem to cover every exterior surface.

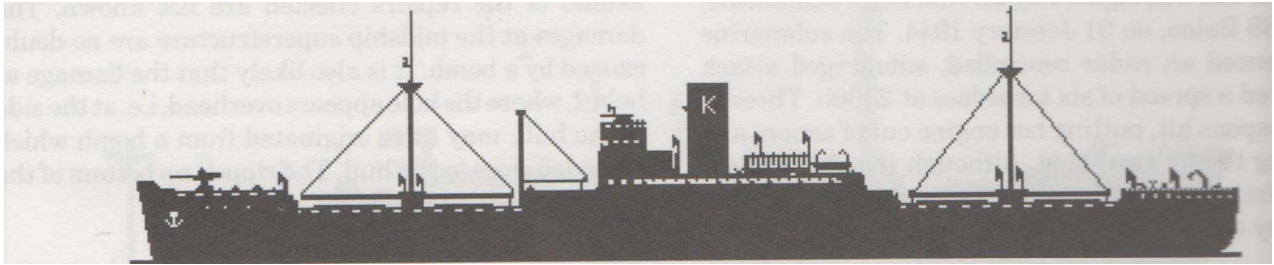


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MOMOKAWA MARU



.THE SHIP 3 December 1939:

Kobe. Laid down at Kawasaki Zosensho, K. K. as Yard No. 659, a 3,829-ton cargo ship for Kawasaki Kisen ("K" Line), K. K. 5 hold cargo passenger ship was 354 ft long with a 50ft beam, a single screw and steam turbines (Parsons, Wallsend on tyne)



17 August 1940:Launched and named MOMOKAWA MARU.

31 March 1941:

Completed. Placed in "K" Line's service. MOMOKAWA MARU carries lumber from Siberia to Japan.

E November 1941:Requisitioned by the Imperial Army (IJA) and assigned Army No. 891.

18 June 1943:Returned by the IJA back to her owners. That same day, MOMOKAWA MARU is requisitioned by the Imperial Navy (IJN) as an Ippan Choyosen (B-AK) with a civilian crew.

1 November 1943:Fleet oiler SHIRETOKO, torpedoed and damaged on 12/13 Sep '43 by Carter L. Bennett's USS PERMIT (SS-178) departs Roi, Marshalls under tow by MOMOKAWA MARU

13 November 1943:W of Marianas Islands. While still under tow by MOMOKAWA MARU, SHIRETOKO is attacked by LtCdr Maximilian G. Schmidt's (USNA '32) USS SCORPION (SS-278). At 0710, Schmidt fires four torpedoes at SHIRETOKO making 6 knots and gets one hit. SHIRETOKO goes dead in the water and down by the stern, but does not sink.

At 0810, USN codebreakers intercept a message from the CO of SHIRETOKO that reads: "At 0712 in position 18-22 N, 142-50 E attacked by enemy sub. One hit in fireroom and port fuel tanks. Can be towed."

23 November 1943:MOMOKAWA MARU arrives at Sasebo Naval Base towing SHIRETOKO.

28 January 1944:

MOMOKAWA MARU departs Roi-Namur, Marshall Islands for Truk in convoy No. 6283 also consisting of KATORI and KENSHO MARUs. MOMOKAWA MARU is towing unnavigable KENSHO MARU (bombed and damaged B-24 "Liberator" bombers on 20 Dec '43).

4 February 1944:Arrives at Truk.

17 February 1944:. MOMOKAWA MARU is attacked by SB2C "Helldiver" dive bombers from USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17) and hit amidships by a 1,000 lb. bomb. She sinks at 07-20N, 151-53E. One crewman is KIA.

She was at anchor south east of Dublon. She was sunk by bombers from the Essex, Bunker Hill and Yorktown during the 16th & 18th February 1944 raids.

THE WRECK TODAY She lies between the San Fransisco and Aikoku in 50 mtrs with a heavy list to port. Descending the mooring line the superstructure appears intact, but the wooden floors have now disintegrated

and the bridge area is easily accessible. A beautiful sponge encrusted telegraph leans over to port with speaker tubes in attendance. Behind is a stairwell which allows access to the lower levels of the super structure



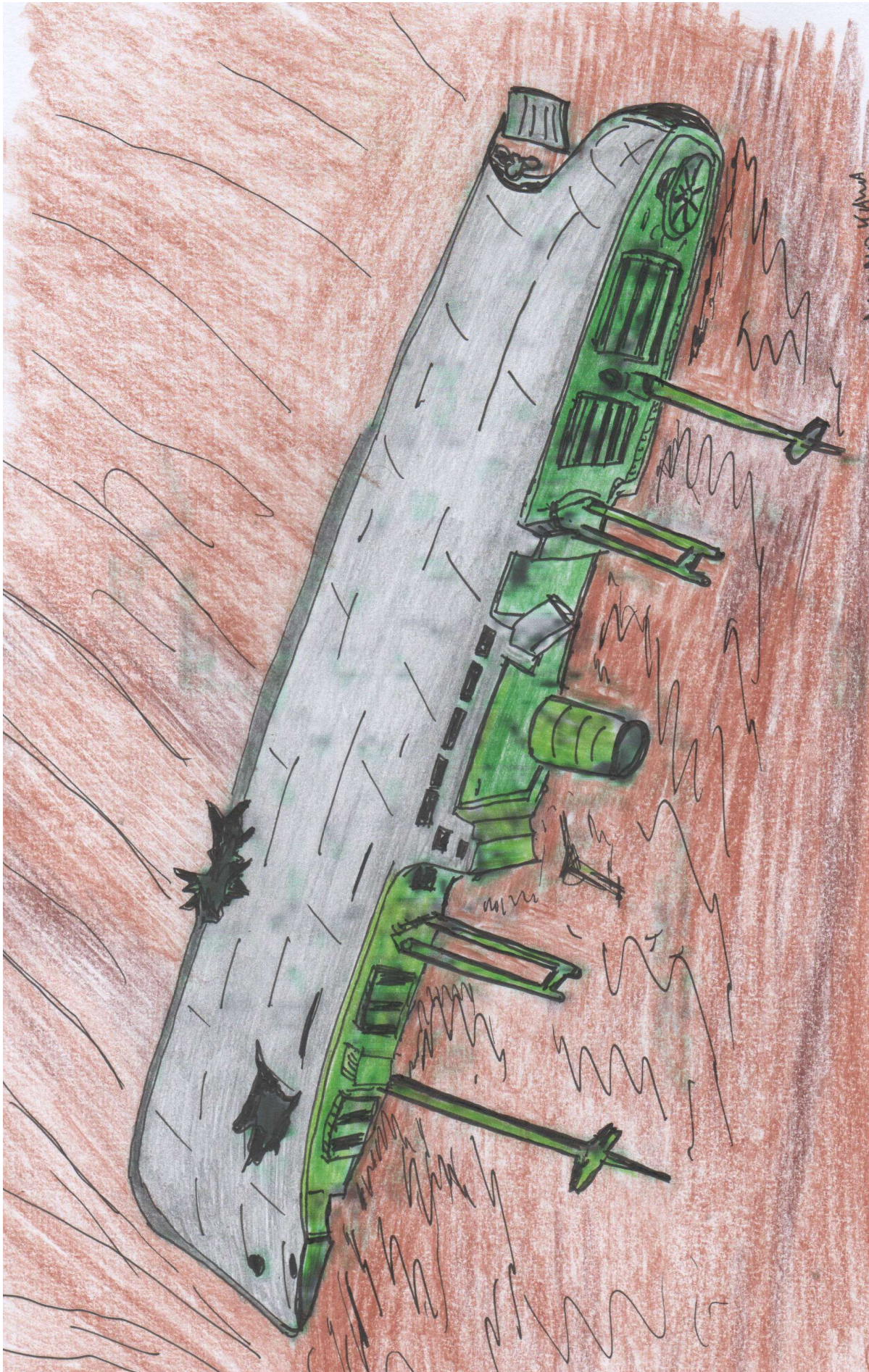
The open bridge/navigation deck sports her instruments to this day; telegraph and voice pipes covered in sea squirts. Bottom left is the rudder stand (helm)

If time allows the bow is worth a look, as is the fo'c'sle itself. A spare anchor stands on the bulkhead by the fo'c'sle door. The forward holds are full of interesting artefacts and materials; Tabby aircraft (Japanese build DC3) in dismantled parts, trucks (holds 2 and 3) and spare aircraft engines, crockery and shell casings. The aft holds, no's 4 and 5 are of less interest.

The poop deck has a set of skylights, flanked by two artillery field guns, although one has now fallen onto the seabed. Below deck here there is a fascinating and photogenic rudder control system. Her masts rise, slanting over towards the surface and attract many shoaling jacks.



This is a big wreck to cover with such limited bottom time and requires several dives to begin to explore her secrets. The minimum depth is 80ft-just short of 30 mtrs. down to 145ft- 50mtrs +. Like many of the wrecks close by, she is a strong argument for rebreathers! The wrecks in this area also offer some of the best visibility, and for the photographer with a wide angle lens that's a huge bonus.



NAGANO MARU

THE SHIP;

5 October 1917:Kobe. Laid down at Kawasaki Shipbuilding as Yard No. 409, a 5,901-ton passenger-cargo ship and named DAIFUKU MARU (TAIFUKU) No. 22. She was 345 ft long, 50 ft beam, draught 2 feet, single screw driven by a single triple expansion engine using the original north east England patterns but tandemised (reverse engineering from the ships built on the Tyne for the Japco-Russian war).

1917: Sold to the Nippon Yusen Kaisha K. K. (NYK Line), Tokyo. Renamed **NAGATO MARU** while still on the stocks.

1918-1941: Serves on NYK's routes.

18 October 1941: Requisitioned by the Imperial Army (IJA). Allotted IJA No. 984.

8 December 1941: The Pacific War Begins.

7 November 1942: Departs Manila with two unidentified ships. NAGATO MARU is carrying about 1,500 IJA troops on deck and 1,600 American prisoners-of-war (POWs), many survivors of the "Bataan Death March." About 550 POWs are crammed into each of NAGATO MARU's three holds.

11 November 1942: Arrives at Takao, Formosa. 17 POWs die en route. [1]

24 November 1942: Arrives at Moji. 3 more POWs die en route. Disembarks POWs for an Osaka POW camp.

Departs Ujina. NAGATO MARU carries most of the IJA 54th Division's 154th Infantry's 2nd Battalion, 1 platoon of Regiment Gun Company, Rapid Fire Gun Company (less 1 platoon) and part of Signal Unit.

28 August 1943: At 0945, convoy "Wewak No. 7" again departs Palau, less YUBAE MARU. NAGATO MARU is carrying 100 soldiers, farmers, 8,000 drums aviation gasoline, 10 vehicles, 2,000 cases general cargo and 101,000 bags rice.

2 September 1943: At 0045, the convoy anchors at Wewak. Later that day, the convoy is attacked by about 30 B-25 "Mitchell" medium bombers escorted by P-38 "Lightning" fighters. ADEN and NAGANO MARU are damaged.

January 1944 arrives Truk and anchors in the Fourth fleet anchorage east of Dublon Island.

Like all the other wrecks in the lagoon she was a target for the American carrier fleet, being singled out by aircraft from Essex and sunk during the second wave of attacks. She lies deep in the centre of the Fourth fleet anchorage east of Dublon in 65 mtrs on a slope. The bow sits in 50 mtrs, and the top of superstructure in 45 mtrs. Her holds and engine room are a normoxic 55+ mtrs. The waters here are very clear allowing for true appreciation of her size.

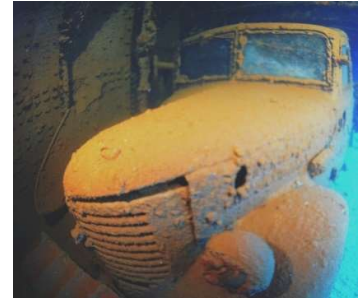


Her fo'c'sle boasts a large gun, windlass and anchor chains, and the entire wreck lists over to port. The fo'c'sle itself is accessible and allows for a great swim through, although it is fairly empty, there are still several artefacts to be seen. Several

doorways allow for easy access. Good finning techniques are required as 70 years of silt have formed a carpet which is easily stirred up. In the bottom of the forward holds are drum and torpedo bodies, lying in a



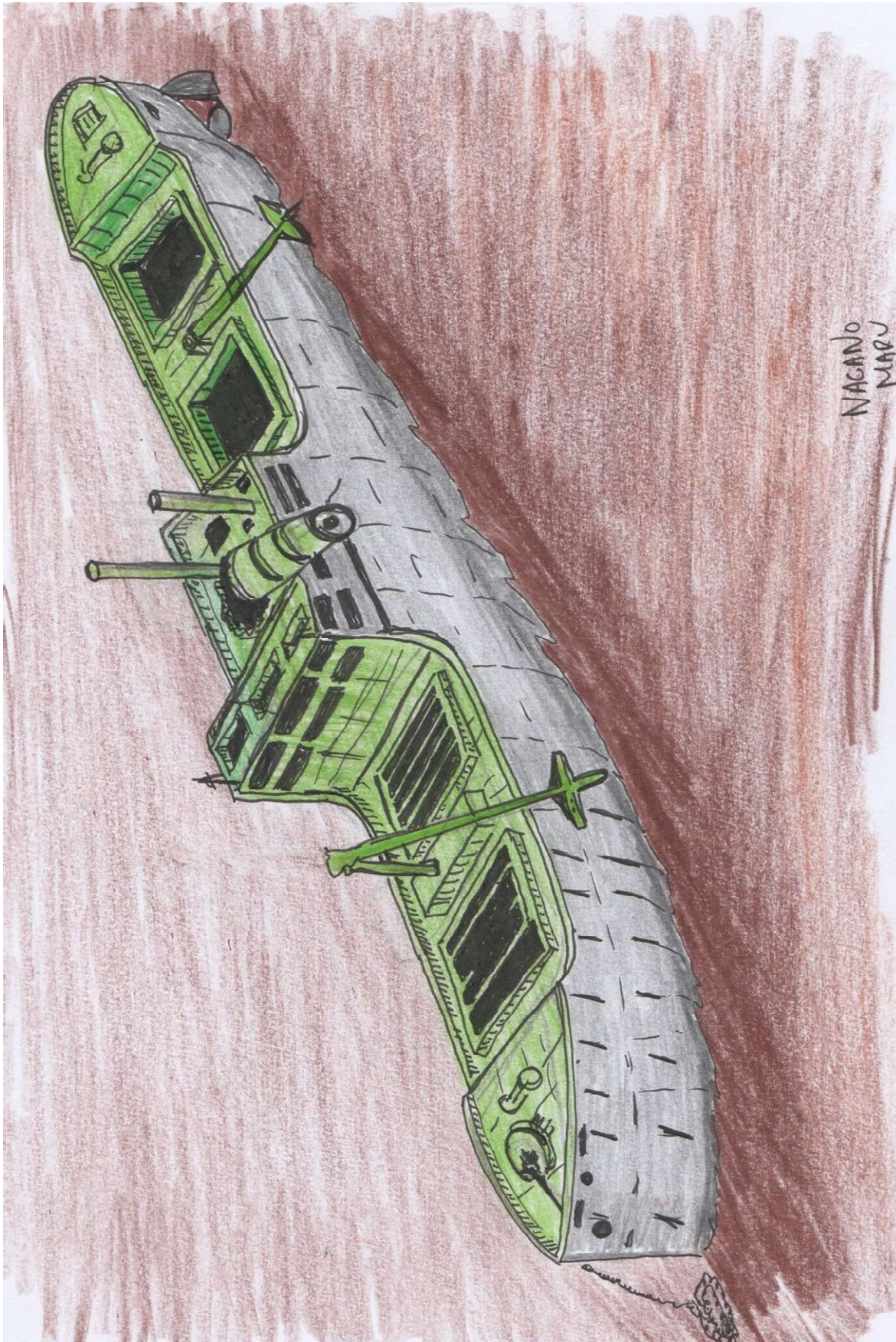
confused jumble in the silt. The tween decks which flank all sides of the holds are more interesting. Here there are several Nissan flat bed trucks in remarkable condition, their radiator grills over sized lights making a very distinctive vision and a superb photographic subject. There are several other machines used for air strip construction, including a diesel roller, bull dozer, generators , and trailers .Bags of cement lie scattered around.



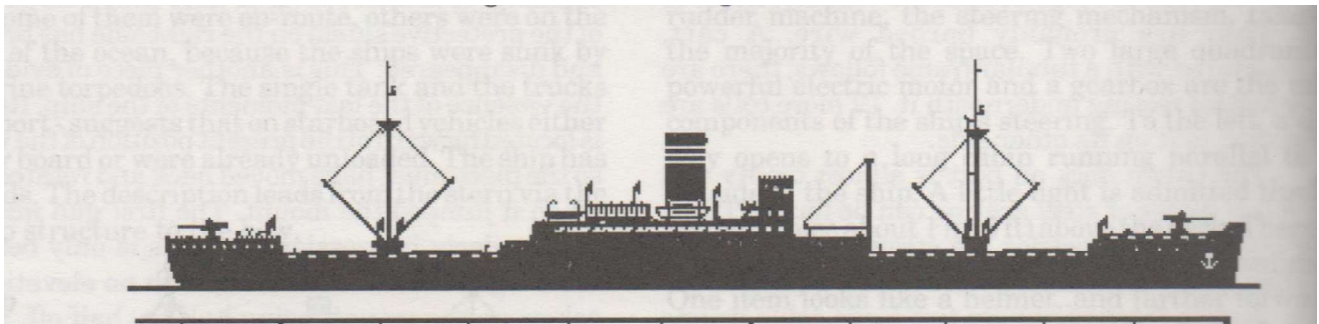
The bridge has typical docking wings where several telegraphs once stood. The helm, rudderpost and direction indicators still remain. The funnel has fallen over to port and air scoops lie scattered around the engine house. Her triple expansion engines are totally intact, catwalks workshops and control panels, repeater telegraph, Valves gauges can all be found. The engine house is flanked by accommodation blocks(for steerage passengers, akin to the layout of the Rosalie Moller).The aft holds have little of interest and there is a small stern castle with helm and rudder post, steering quadrant and direction indicator.



Hovering over the bow ,its colours revealed in strobe light, Richard takes in an aerial view ,afforded by the stunning visibility- at 45 mtrs-the sea bed is 18 mtrs below



NIPPO MARU



One of the most spectacular visions of Truk- looking out from the bridge of the Nippo Maru

Built by Kawasaki Zosensho K.K. at Kobe for for Okazaki Honten K.K. Launched September 16, 1936 and named Nippo Maru. Completed and registered in Kobe on November 10, 1936.

On December 24, 1936 chartered to Osaka Shosen K.K. (OSK) and departs Kobe bound for [Kirun](#) Length: **107.5 metres**, built **16 September 1936**. Tonnage: **3,763**, **water carrier**.

THE OTHER NIPPO MARU...Built as Ningpo 6089TON t in Gothenburg in Sweden, and was launched in 1937 for the company Svenska Ostasiatiska kompaniet AB and put in service in the sugar transport between USA and Asia . She was scuttled in Hong Kong 11.December 1941 to prevent her from falling into enemy hand, but was raised by the Japanese in 1942 and put in service for the military and renamed Nippo Maru. 29.June 1944 she was torpedoed by the American submarine USS Flasher.



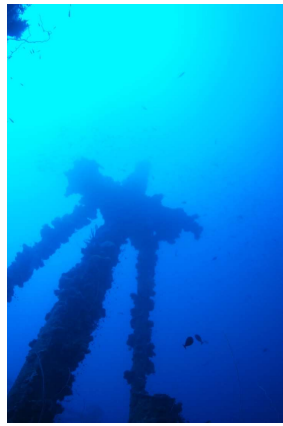
On February 17 , 1944 during "Operation Hailstone" anchored in the Natshushima Anchorage (east of [Dublon Island](#)) attacked by three TBF Avengers from USS Essex CV-9 and received a direct hit in the cargo hold and engine room. At 6:00pm ordered to return and at 11:00pm hit in the engine room.

The Nippo lies on a sandy bottom in 48 metres of water, lying in an east-west direction with the bow slightly shallower than the stern and having a slight list to port. The wreck is basically intact, with only slight damage to the bridge area and stern visible.



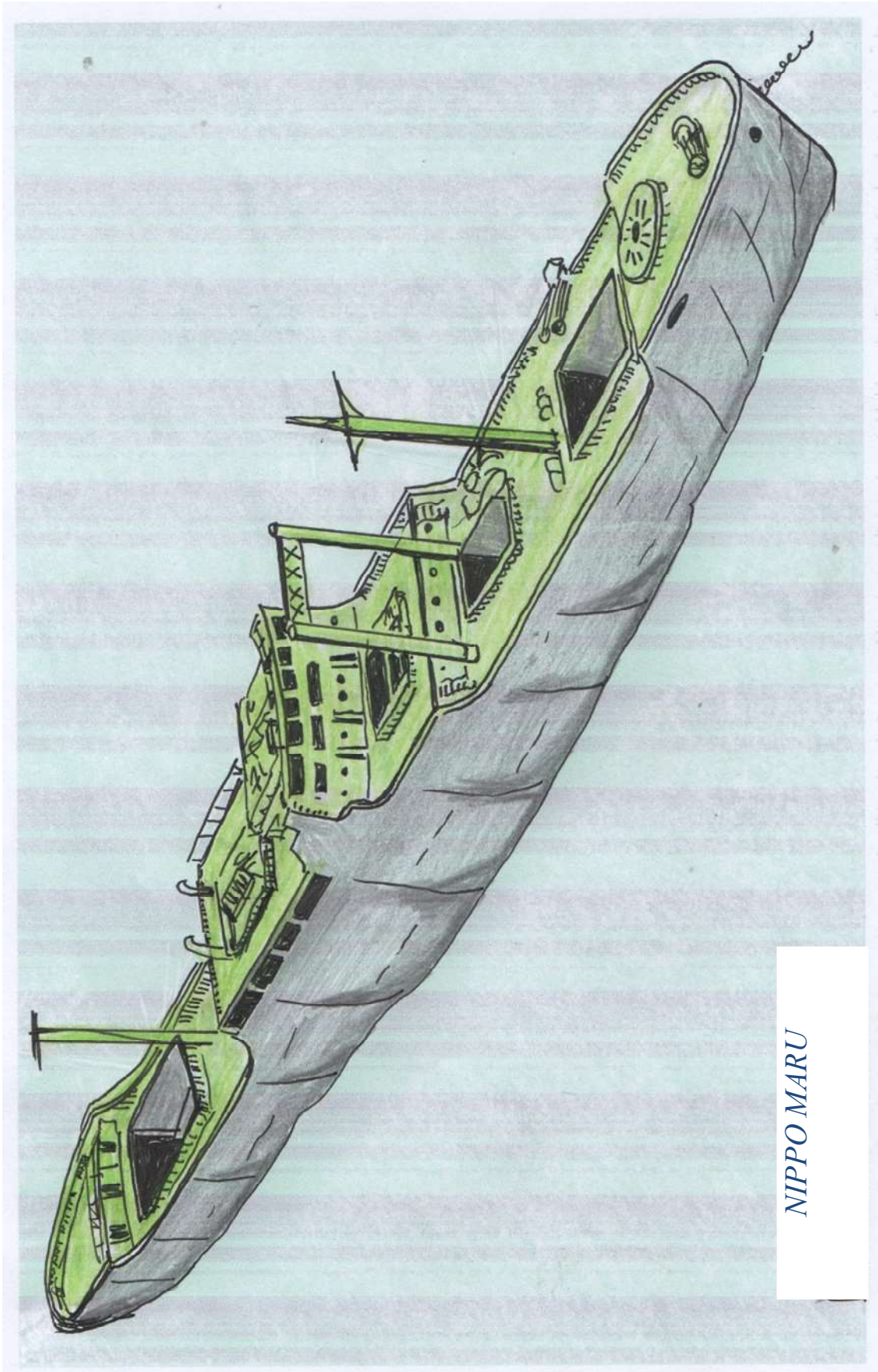
The haunting images of the bow gun and HE- GO (type 97) tank of the Nippo Maru.

One of the deeper wrecks, the blue waters adds to the excitement. Eagle rays patrol the wreck. When you add to the superb condition of the wreck the artefacts and cargo, you have before you one of the worlds' greatest wrecks. On the deck there are howitzers and a Type 97 tank. Her five holds are packed full with ammunition and armaments of all kinds. Hemispherical mines, cannon barrels, gun mounts for shore batteries, machine guns, gas masks, and small arms ammunition of all kinds lie scattered all around this wreck. The bridge is almost intact with its ships compass and engine telegraphs, quite an eerie sight. Near number 4 hold are three field howitzers still mounted on their wheeled carriages. She lies to the west of Dublon.



THESE IMAGES TELL THE STORY OF A MAGNIFICENT SHIPWRECK- UPRIGHT. IN CLEAR WATER ALMOST INTACT AND FULL OF SCINTILATING ARTIFACTS, JUS ADD A GREAT BUDDY AND SOME HELIUM





NIPPON MARU

Ijn Oite

Name Translation: "Favourable Wind"

The Japanese destroyer Oite (追風, "Tail Wind") was one of nine Kamikaze-class destroyers built for the I J N during the 1920s. Displacement: 1,422 t (1,400 long tons) (normal), 1,747 t (1,719 long tons) (deep load) Length: 97.5 m (319 ft 11 in) Beam: 9.1 m (29 ft 10 in), Draft: 2.9 m (9 ft 6 in)

Installed power: 38,500 shp (28,700 kW), 4 ×

Kampon water-tube boilers Propulsion: 2 shafts; 2 × Kampon geared steam turbines. Speed: 37.3 knots (69.1 km/h; 42.9 mph) Range: 3,600 nmi (6,700 km; 4,100 mi) at 14 knots (26 km/h; 16

mph) Complement: Armament: 4 × single 12 cm (4.7 in) Type 3 guns, 3 × twin 53.3 cm (21.0 in) torpedo tubes Initial Command Structure:

Ship's Captain: Lieutenant Commander Yanase Yoshio (prev. C.O. SAGI). Assigned to Desdiv 29 (OITE, HAYATE, ASANAGI, YUNAGI), Desron 6, Fourth Fleet. Flagship of Comdesdiv 29, Captain Setoyama Yasuhide .

8-11 December: With HAYATE (1st section, Desdiv 29), departed Kwajalein with first Wake Island invasion force. Carried SNLF advance landing party. Light damage: due to near-misses by U.S. coastal Batteries, 14 injured.

20 September-1 October: Departed Truk, escorting convoy to Japan. Minor damage: on 21 September when struck by dud torpedo, possibly launched by USS HADDOCK (SS-231) in attack that damaged SHIN-YUBARI MARU; then via Saipan to Yokosuka.

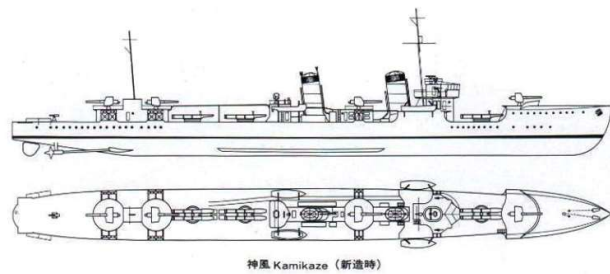
4-18 January 1944: Escorted convoys from Truk to Rabaul and back. Between 13-16 January both convoyed ships of Truk-bound Convoy No. 2112 were lost.

15-16 February:

Departed Truk, with Subchaser No. 28 escorting AGANO to Japan; then assisted torpedoed AGANO, helped rescue survivors, and turned back for Truk.

18 February:

Sunk: in U.S. air raid on Truk, while entering base via North Pass ; struck by aerial torpedo amidships, broke in half and sank instantly. About 20 survivors; 172 crew, including Lieutenant Uono, as well as Captain Matsuda Takatomo and 522 crew of AGANO, all killed in action.

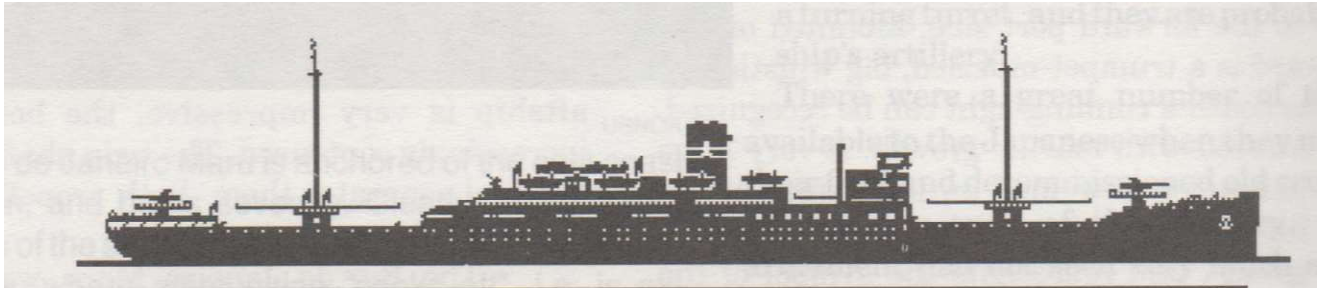


THE WRECK TODAY. Along with the Katsuragisan these two wrecks represent the most challenging aspects of diving in Truk- depth and distance from base tend to make them prohibitive. No pain no gain!

Lying in 62 mtrs of very clear water, with the shallowest part at around 55 mtrs, the wreck is in two halves, with the fore section upside down and only her foc'sle accessible, lying on its starboard side.

The aft section still supports her guns with 25 mm AA guns, a 4.7, depth charge launchers and torpedo tubes. Aft of the smoke stack the engine room skylights can be seen, although entry to the engine room itself is quite difficult. The props and rudder are partially buried.

RIO DE JANERO MARU



THE SHIP

6 May 1929: Nagasaki. Laid down at Mitsubishi Shipbuilding as a 9,627 GRT passenger-cargo liner for the Osaka Shosen Kaisha (OSK) Line. 460ft long. 8 deck-1140 passengers twin screw driven by 2 6 cylinder Mitsubishi Sulzer diesel engines. 19 November 1929: Launched and named RIO DE JANEIRO MARU.

1 June 1930: Departs her home port of Kobe on her maiden voyage to OSK's South American ports of call.

7 January 1931:

Runs aground in the Mississippi River estuary.



4 September 1939: Collides with KAGU MARU at 46-16N, 177-10E. RIO DE JANEIRO MARU is damaged and KAGU MARU tows the ship.

22 September 1939: Salvage tug SEIHA MARU subsequently takes over the tow and tows the ship to Mitsubishi Jukogyo's Kobe

30 November 1940: Completes conversion that

includes installation of two 25-mm Type 96 dual AA guns, signal equipment and new accommodation spaces.

25 March 1941: Registered as a prospective submarine tender in the Sasebo Naval District. Captain Murase Raiji is appointed CO. Banshu, Hyogo. Begins conversion at Harima's shipyard. Four 5.9-inch (150-mm) guns, a range finder and an anti-magnetic mine degaussing coil are fitted. A torpedo and depth charge hangar is constructed as are replenishment goods storage and a medical facility. Motor launch loading equipment is also installed.

.29 May 1942: Balabac Strait, N of Borneo. LtCdr Chester C. Smith's (USNA '25) USS SWORDFISH (SS-193) operating from Fremantle, Australia, is patrolling the Strait. Smith's lookouts spot a small convoy and he sets up for a submerged night attack. Smith fires two Mark 14 steam torpedoes at what he identifies as a "5,000-ton" oiler, but claims no hits. one of his torpedoes hits RIO DE JANERO MARU and rips open a 46-foot long by 26-foot wide hole in Hold No. 1. Six sailors volunteer to enter RIO DE JANERO MARU's flooded compartment and seal the leak. Later, they receive a commendation from the CINC, Combined Fleet, Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku. Repair ships KASUGA MARU and YAMABIKO MARU arrive later and tow RIO DE JANERO MARU to Singapore for repairs.

June 1942: Singapore. RIO DE JANERO MARU is drydocked and repaired at Seletar's No. 1 Shipyard (former King George V Graving Dock).

27 July 1942: 94 miles E of Camranh, Indochina. RIO MARU is attacked by Lt Cdr James C. Dempsey's USS SPEARFISH (SS-190). Dempsey later claims two hits of four torpedoes he fires in a submerged night attack. He departs thinking the stopped ship is sinking by the stern. The next day, Captain Ohashi reports RIO DE JANERO MARU suffered "medium" damage, but is able to proceed to Hong Kong for repairs.



Arrives at Truk. 17 February 1944: East of Uman Island. Anchored RIO DE JANEIRO MARU is hit by 1,000-lb. bombs during TF 58's first attacks, probably dropped by SBDs of USS YORKTOWN (CV-10) and SB2Cs of USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17). Captain Kanemasu is KIA. He is promoted Rear Admiral, posthumously.

18 February 1944: At 0030, RIO DE JANEIRO MARU sinks with the loss of two crewmen. She comes to rest on her starboard side at depth of 115 feet.

THE WRECK TODAY The fourth biggest wreck in Truk. This huge 8 deck passenger ship lies on her side. close to Uman Island, which is probably why the wreck is covered in weed and algae's, and the water has a greenish hue. Never the les she is a great dive and being fairley shallow allows for long no deco dives for the scubbie visitor.

Her fore and aft guns are still in place, and with the fo'c'sle being so large it could accommodate ammunition stores and a loading mechanism-at 90degrees from true it can be confusing at first glance. Huge winches flank



the mast house, situated between hold 1 & two and here for mast runs out seaward-covered in huge coral bushes.

These masts, like those on other wrecks lying on their side offer a shallower dive amidst glorious marine life, and where depth becomes a restriction due to accumulation of nitrogen exposure. Thousands of glass fish, invertebrates and coral bushes provide endless subject matter.

In hold two there is a huge gun base-noticeable by its serrated edges. The holds are cavernous and all cargo is now piles in the deeper parts

The superstructure is skeletal-her wood long since gone either by fire or torpedo worms, and houses the galley complete with utensils again fallen into a pile on her port side, with care it is possible to explore 3 floors-without altering depth.

It is her engine room that sets the pulse racing. Swimming into her interior, 5 floors in less than 25 metres, is quite an experience, if a little disorientating. Workshops,



switch panels, machinery, gauges and control panels ae some of the many features. Covered in a golden



concretion, there are endless if challenging photo opportunities.

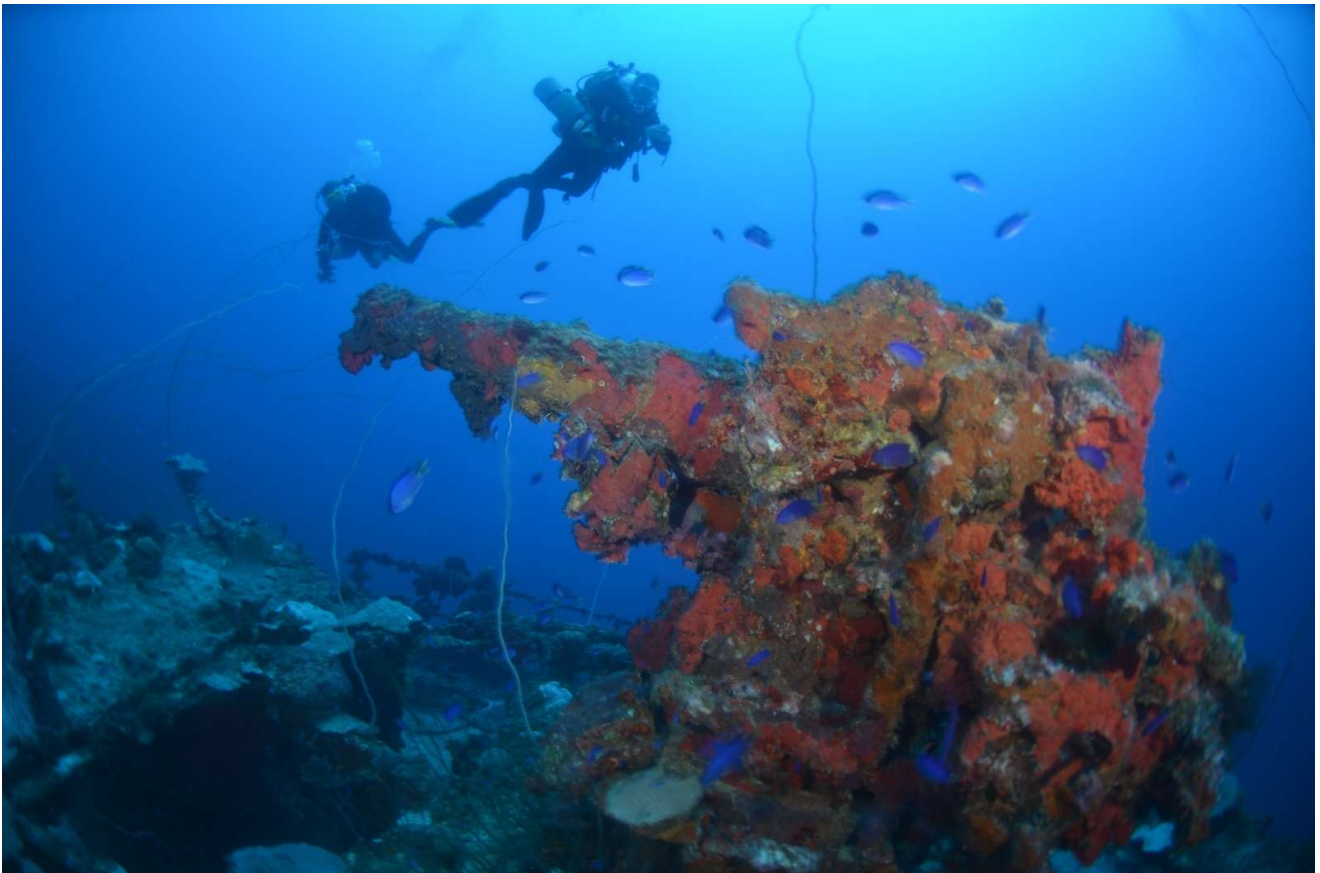
There are numerous life boat davits still in place, their curved shape un mistakable, and huge soft corals hang down creating a spectacular curtain, mixing with tubular sponges, gorgonia and a myriad of small fishes.

Number 5 hold contains crates of beer bottles, and the stern castle again supports a large gun, ammunition and her steering mechanism.

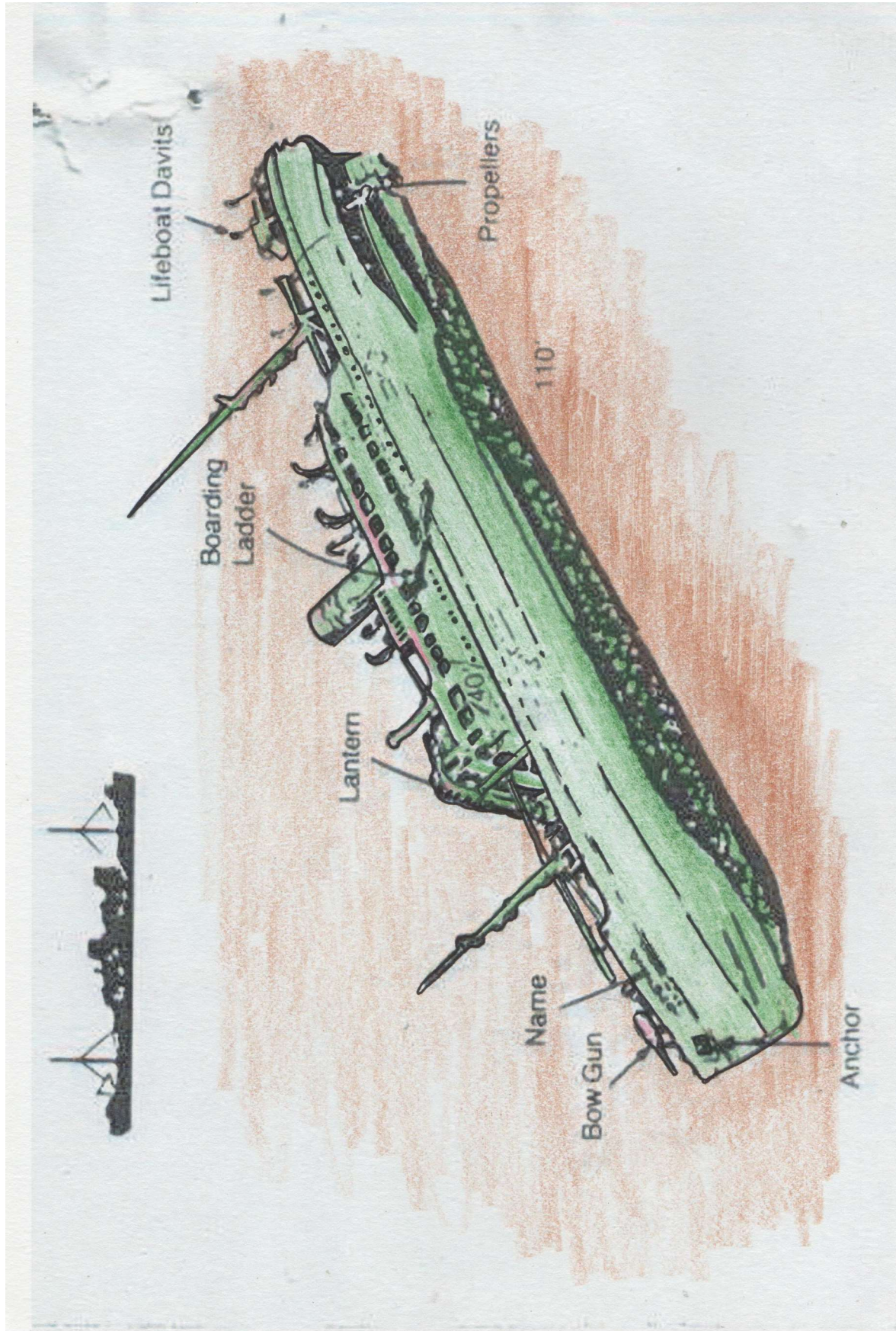


The props and rudder make an amazing sight, especially with a diver in view to put their size into perspective.

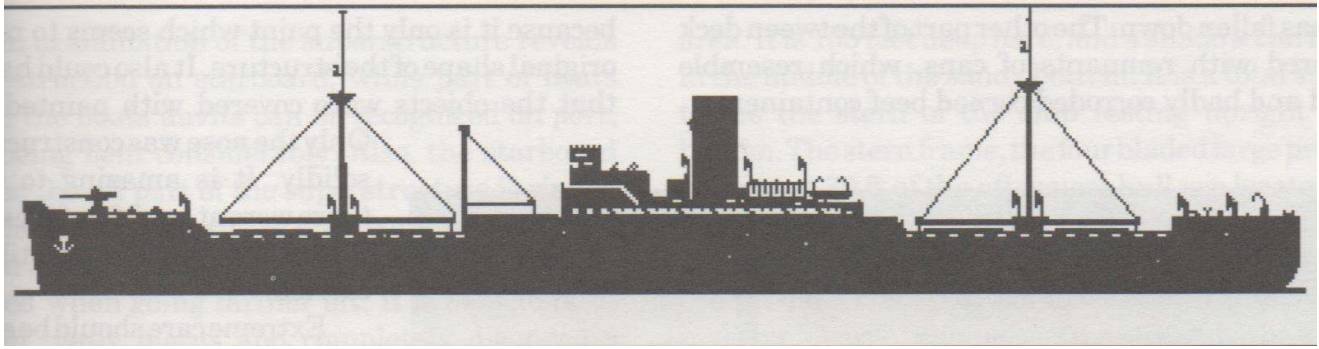
Rio de Janeiro Maru sits at a maximum depth of about 34 metres, with the ship lying on its starboard side. Because of her location the visibility is “less sparkling” than elsewhere. She is covered in “weed” more than coral and can be a “gloomy” wreck. Huge props, stern telegraphs, massive bridge and bow gun all add to the interest. Due to the size of the wreck, it takes several dives to fully explore her. She lies west of Uman.



THE CORAL COVERED REAR GUN OF TH RIO DE JANERO MARU SURROUNDED BY ANTHEAS



SANKISAN MARU



THE SHIP Sankisan Maru was owned by Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK), built at Osaka (Harima dockyard) 366 ft long, 52 ft beam, fitted with a tandem triple expansion steam engine and used as a passenger and cargo vessel with a 6,000 ton capacity. Prewar, used to transport rice from Indo-China (Vietnam), Korea and China. during one trip from Japan, transported six locomotives and 54,000 yards of canvas to Phnom Penh. Requisitioned by the Japanese Army as a cargo vessel (AK) to transport military cargo armed with machine guns for anti-aircraft defense.

On October 26, 1943, departs Yokosuka as part of convoy No. 3026 with Choan Maru No. 2, Soyo Maru, Awa Maru escorted by Fukue. On October 28, 1943 Sankisan Maru suffers a mechanical break down and is escorted by Fukue to Chi Chi Jima arriving two days later at 1:30pm and repaired.

During 1943 operated at Saipan. On November 18, 1943 departs Truk Lagoon at 10:00am as part of a convoy with Hinode Maru escorted by minesweeper W-28. On December 2, 1943 at 6:00am departs Chi Chi Jima as part of a convoy with Hinode Maru escorted by Patrol Boat No. 46 and minesweeper W-28 bound for Yokosuka.

During January 23-31, 1944 at Yokosuka. On January 31, 1944 at 7:00am departs Yokosuka bound for Truk Lagoon as part of a convoy with Zuikai Maru, Ryuko Maru and Taiho Maru escorted by subchasers CH-29, CH-64 and auxiliary subchaser Takunan Maru No. 6 and auxiliary minesweeper Keinan Maru. En route during February 1944 subchaser CH-32 joins the convoy to provide additional escort. On February 12, 1944 Sankisan Maru arrived at Truk Lagoon.

On February 17, 1944 during "Operation Hailstone" she was anchored to the west of Uman Island in Truk Lagoon loaded with ordnance and supplies. During USS Bunker Hill Strike 3D, four SB2C Helldivers from VB-17 attacked Amagisan Maru then attacked Sankisan, hitting it in the forward deck with a 1,000 lb bomb and strafed by two escorting F6F Hellcats from VF-18 firing 400 rounds at an "AK south of Fefan Island".

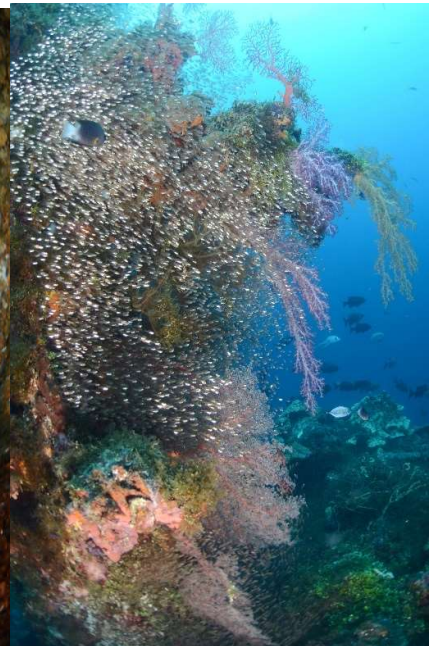
The next day on February 18, 1944 during "Operation Hailstone" this vessel was again targeted by USS Bunker Hill Strike 3A by five SB2C Helldivers attacked "an AK at anchor about a half mile west of Uman Island" and scored a hit to the aft with a bomb or torpedo that caused an explosion that damaged the midship and caused the vessel to sink. The stern section was blown off and sank into deeper water. Possibly, the hit or fire caused ordnance stored in the aft hold to explode. The explosion caused a crater in the sea bed.

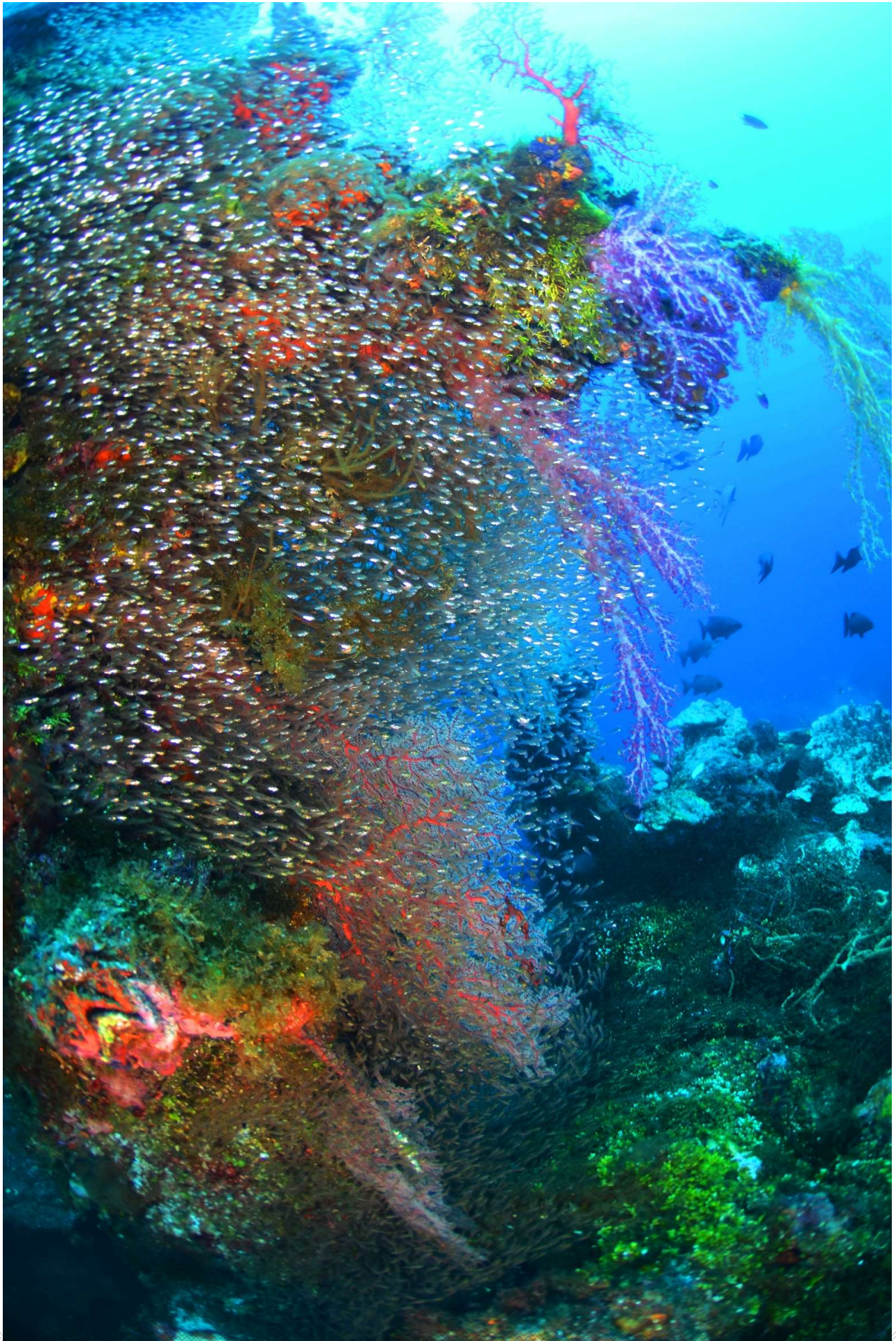
THE WRECK TODAY. Only the fore-section of this ship remains; aft of the bridge was destroyed by a massive explosion and a tangled mass of metal lies strewn down to 25 metres. There is still much to see in the holds and on the deck. Thousands of small medicine bottles, liberated from the long gone wooden crates lie

scattered in one hold while a similar carpet of bullets lie elsewhere. On deck there are skeletal remains of a couple of trucks and the fo'c'sle is accessible and interesting. Much of the upright section of the wreck is festooned in a lush assortment of soft corals boasting a multitude of colours. She lies off the west side of Uman Island.



Bathed in strong sunlight and in shallow waters the true colours of this wreck can be truly appreciated.





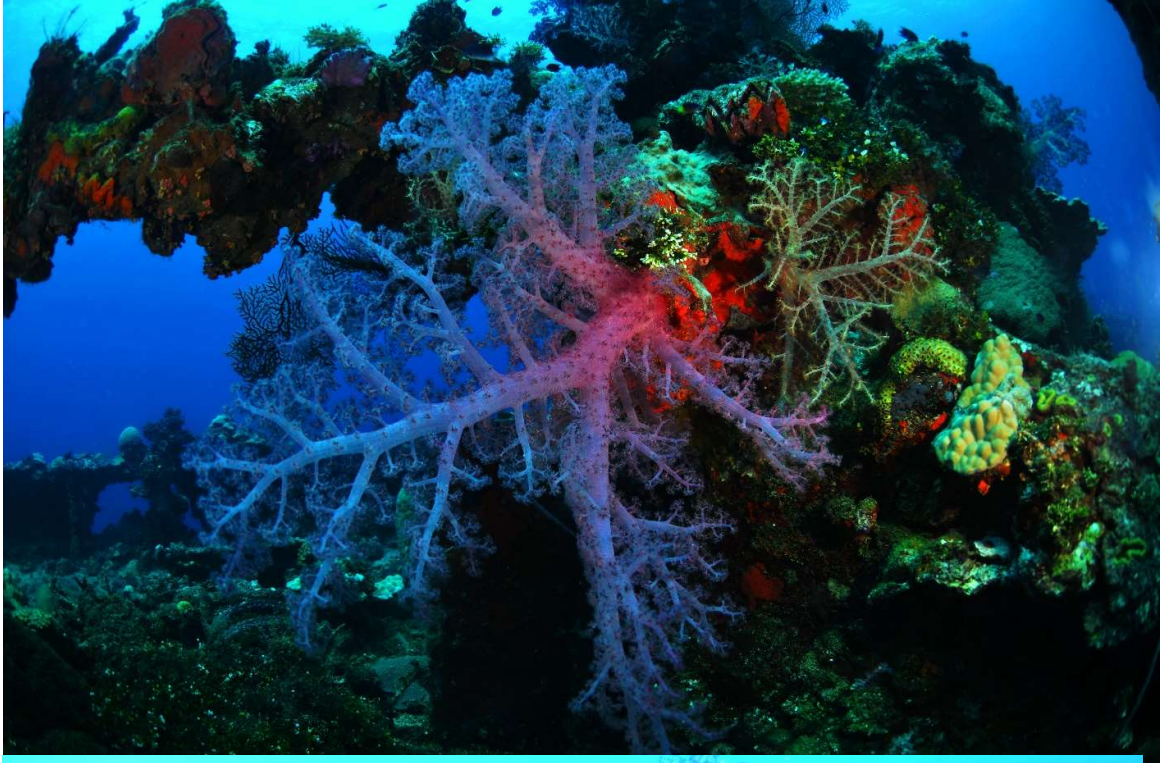


A diver glides over the deck, the overhead structure is a coral adorned boom arm.

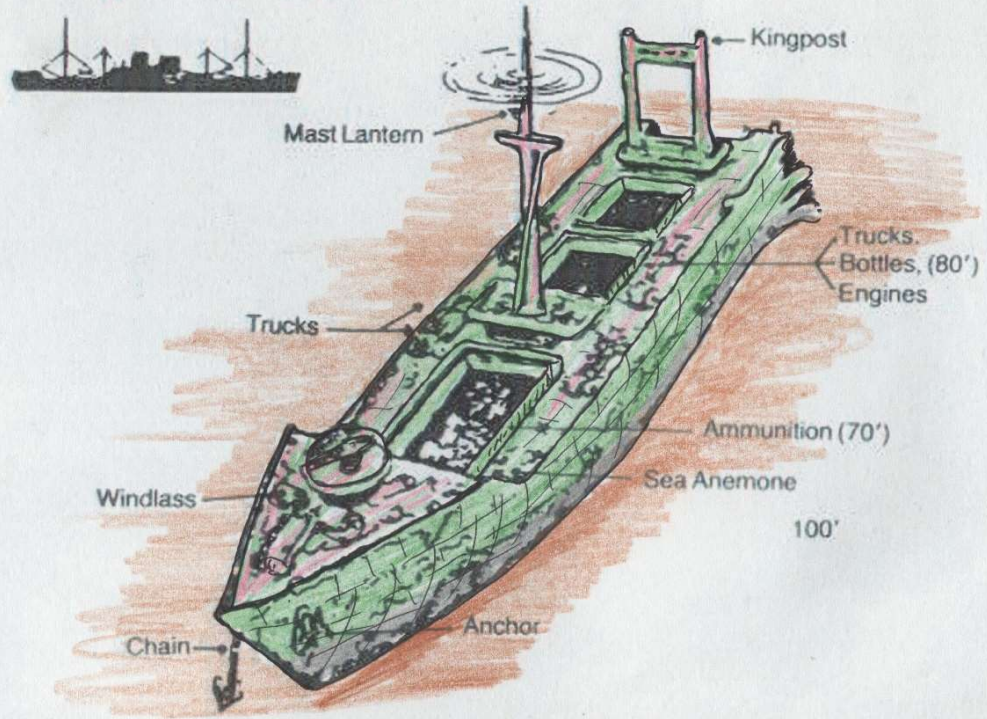


An aircraft engine lies silent in the forward hold

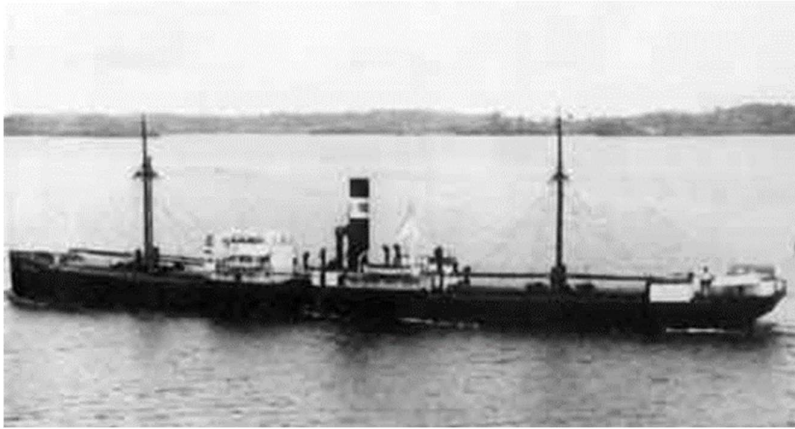
A badly decomposed truck lies on the port tween



SANKISAN MARU



SAN FRANCISCO MARU



5 January 1919:Kobe. Laid down at Kawasaki Kisen, K. K. as Yard No. 438, a 5,864-ton passenger-cargo ship for for Kawaski Dockyard Co., Ltd. She was 385 ft long,50 ft beam, 35 ft draught, fitted with a tandemised triple expansion engine.

1 March 1919:Launched and named SAN FRANCISCO MARU.

1 August 1919:Sold to Kokusai Kisen K.K., Yokohama (later Kobe).

January 1923:Converted to fuel oil propulsion.

26 April 1943: SAN FRANCISCO MARU departs Palau for Wewak in convoy "Wewak No. 3" consisting of BUNZAN, KANKOW and HOFUKU MARUs and HAKUTETSU MARU No. 13 and SHINSEI MARU No.

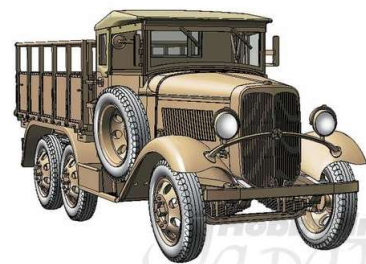
1 escorted by destroyers AMATSUKAZE and URAKAZE and subchasers CH-26 and CH-34. The ships are carrying 6,000 soldiers of the 41st Infantry Division and ammunition, provisions, crated aircraft and supplies.

25 October 1943:

SAN FRANCISCO MARU departs Rabaul for Palau in convoy O-505 also consisting of KOSEI and TAITO MARUs and two unidentified merchant ships escorted by subchasers CH-17 and CH-18

20 January 1944: Departs Yokosuka for Truk in convoy No. 3120 also consisting of HOKI and KOWA MARUs and UNKAI MARU No. 6 escorted by kaibokan OKI. SAN

FRANCISCO MARU's cargo includes a number of Isuzu Type 94 trucks, Type 95 Ha-Go light tanks, ammunition, bombs, mines, AA and artillery shells, torpedoes, aircraft engines and parts.



February 1944:The convoy arrives at Truk.

17 February 1944: American Operation "Hailstone" – The SE of Dublon Island, Truk. SAN FRANCISCO MARU is anchored at the 4th Fleet anchorage when she is attacked and damaged by aircraft of ESSEX (CV-9), USS YORKTOWN (CV-10) and USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17).

18 February 1944:SAN FRANCISCO MARU is dive-bombed by Grumman TBF "Avengers" of ESSEX and hit by up to six 500-lb. bombs. The explosions set her afire and she sinks by the stern. Five crewmen are KIA.

THE WRECK TODAY.

She sits upright in gin clear water in 60 -63 mtrs. The deck is at 50mtrs Rated by many as the best dive in Truk and who can argue? It's a Rosalie Moller on steroids. From her impressive bow gun, through her holds, to the cruiser stern, she is an absolute delight! The forward holds contain hundreds of mines, number two hold has several tanker trucks and a staff car in the upper section while racks of bombs lie below.



The small tanks sit on her deck and there are numerous trucks in the aft holds (Nissan, Isuzu). The engine room



too, is deep at 55mtrs but not only atmospheric but

totally intact. All of her gauges valves and controls remain –it's easy to get into serious deco in here! Bieng an older style of vessel, the engine room is much smaller than some of her counterparts, but never the less thrilling.



Many artefacts remain in the bridge area. This is a wreck full of character and atmosphere. She is an old tramp ship, steam engine driven, and is always a favourite with wreck buffs. Again like the Nippo, she is deeper, and the water always appears blue and clear. Decompression is a must, as are repeat dives! She lies north of Tonowas.



A bulldozer lying on the seabed in 65 mtrs



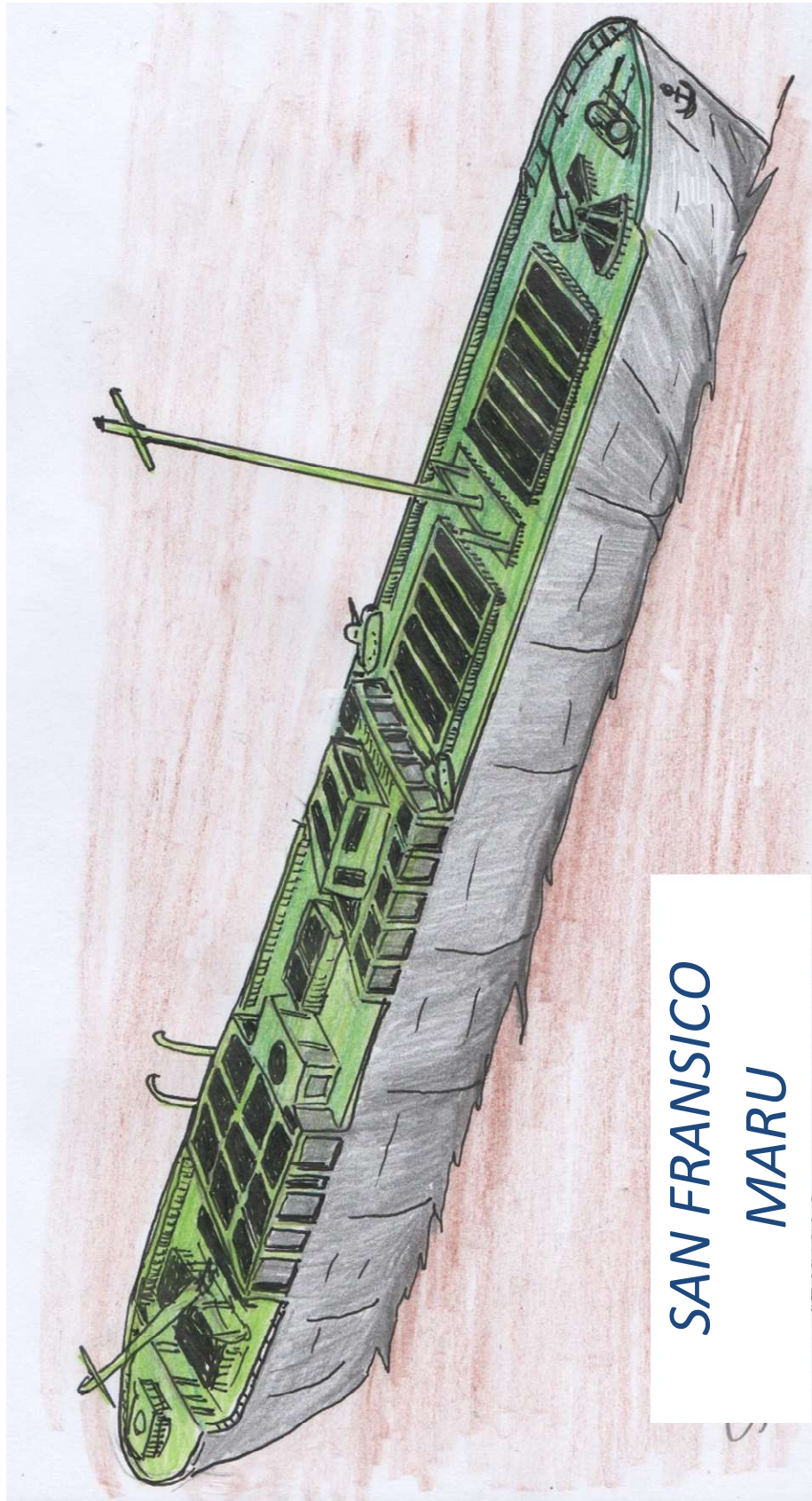
only the tip of the propeller shows next to a colourful rudder



The bow gun sits on its pedestal, a monument to war, the wood deck flooring now long gone.



Even in monochrome the deck cargo of tanks and trucks is thought provoking-natural light at 50 mtrs!

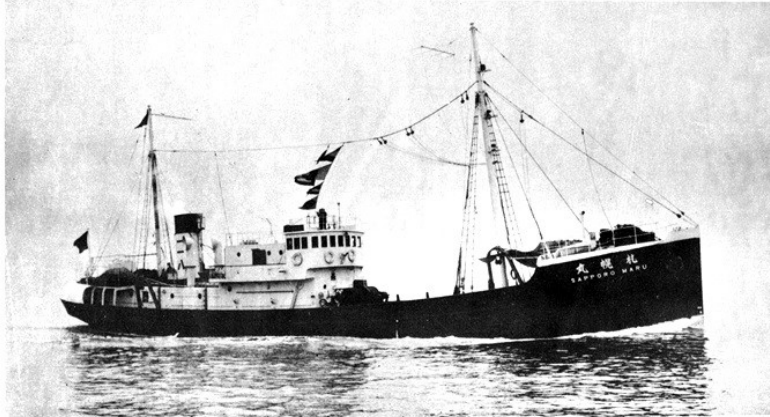


**SAN FRANCISCO
MARU**

SAPPORO MARU

THE SHIP ;9 August 1930:Hikoshima. Laid down by Mitsubishi Zosen K.K. shipyard as a 361-tons,145ft long ocean going trawler (FV) for Kyodo Gyogyo K.K. deisel powered.

24 October 1930:Launched and named SAPPORO MARU.



25 November 1930:Completed with Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) and Net Registered Tonnage (NRT) respectively of 361-tons and 151-tons. Registered at Tobata. 1]

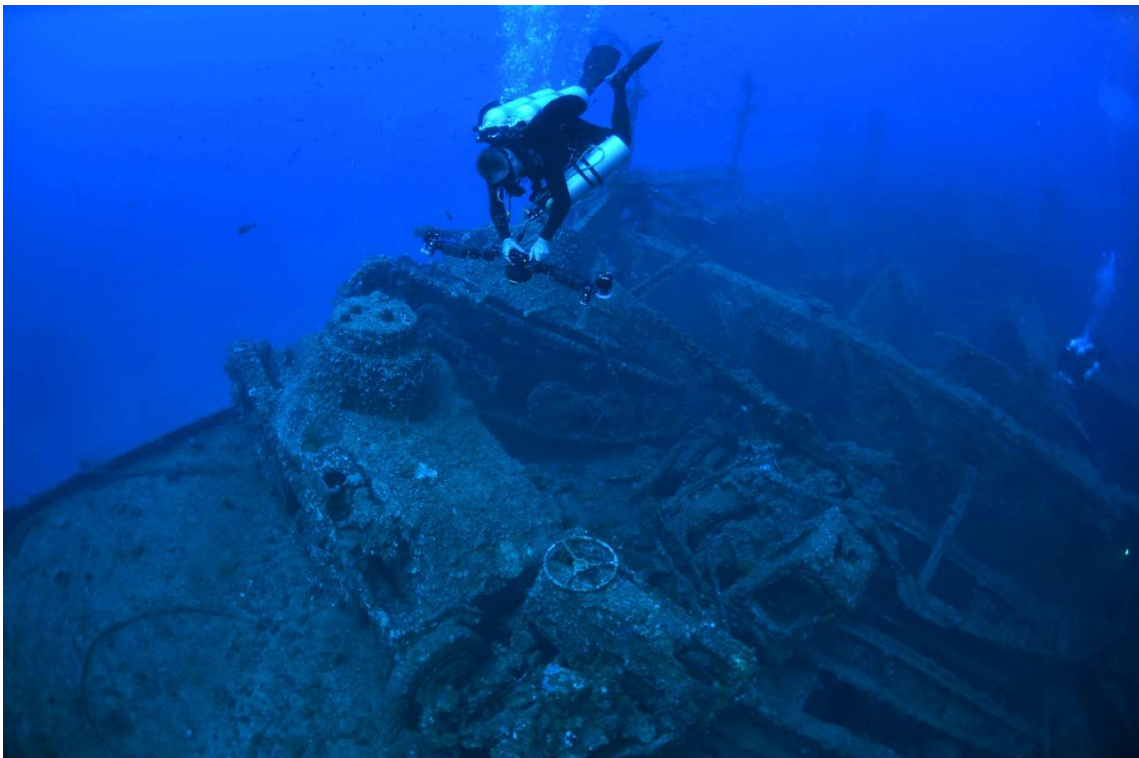
5 December 1930:Kyodo Gyogyo K.K receives a steamer trawl fishing permit available for 10 years. Operation areas include: Tokai and Yellow Sea, Bering Sea E of 160E, within the line from Cape Olutluski to Cape Nawalin excluding sea level within 60 depths of water, South China Sea.

Harvesting ports were Tobata, Shimonoseki, Nagasaki, Osaka, Aomori and Hakodate.

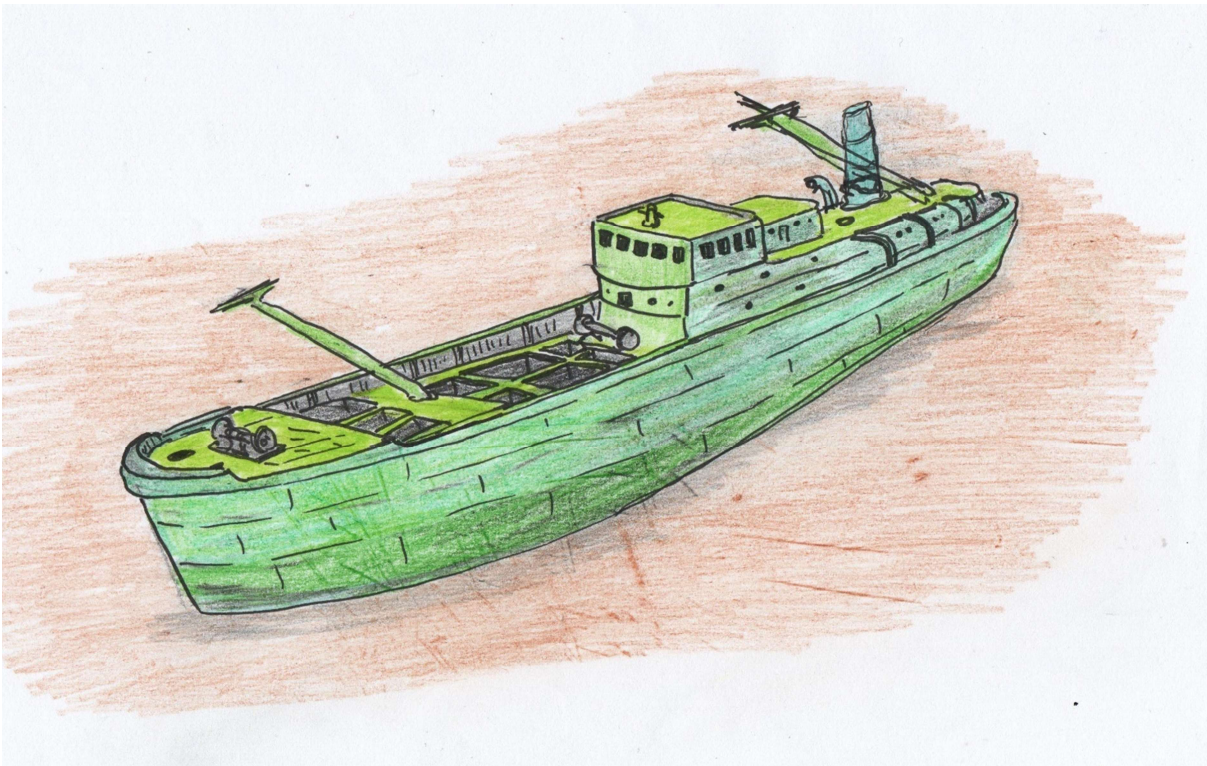
Requisitioned by the IJN.

20 January 1944:Registered as an auxiliary stores ship attached to the Yokosuka Naval District under instruction No. 156. Attached to Vice Admiral Kobayashi Masashi's Fourth Fleet as an auxiliary stores ship Otsu category.

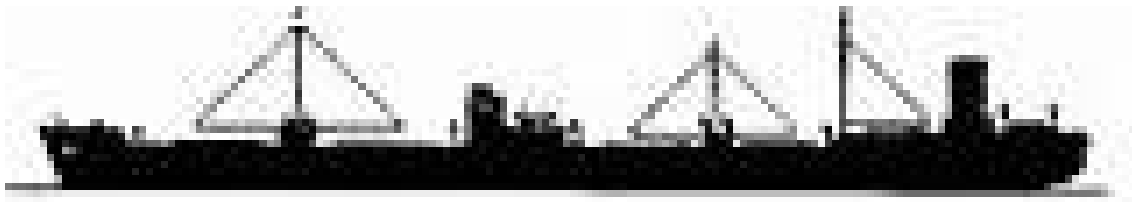
4 May 1944:SW Truk, north of Fefan Island, Truk Lagoon. Sunk by USN TF-58 aircraft at 07-18N, 151-21E. Two crewmen are KIA.



THE WRECK TODAY. One of the less visited wrecks due to its (lack of) size and an area of poor viz, the trawler sits in 28 mtrs north of Fetan upright with its bow in 18 mtrs..The masts have fallen over but her funnel is still upright. The best viz found was in fact in her engine room. The wheel house is accessible, with the steering helm still in situ, and is full of glassy sweepers. Given the vast choice of wrecks and the very limited time visiting divers have available it's one that few will dive.



SEIKO MARU



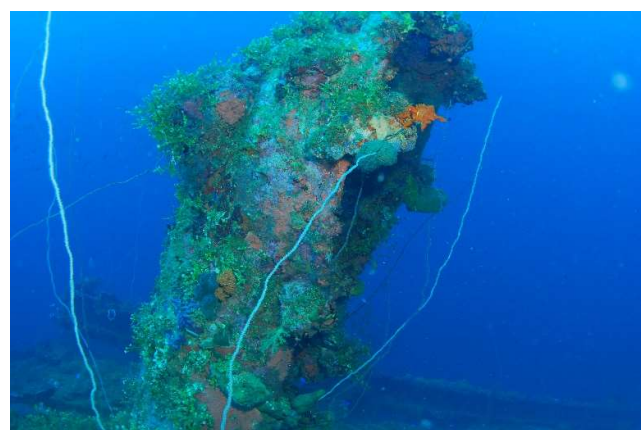
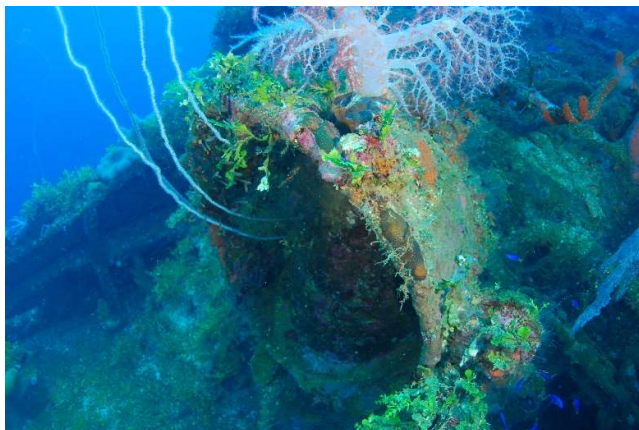
The SS Seiko Maru was launched July 17, 1940 for original owners, Dairen Steamship Co. as a modern cargo vessel of a then unique design with engines aft rather than amidships. This design offered increased cargo hold space eliminating a space robbing propeller shaft tunnel and a need for extended shaft and bearings. Resembling an oil tanker layout, it was reported as a tanker loss by US aircraft pilots during the attack of Feb 1944.

The Seiko had been requisitioned by the Imperial Japanese Navy for its design advantages along with heavy cargo lifting gear for use throughout their Pacific campaign. She was accompanied by 3 other partially damaged ships on a voyage from Rabaul PNG to Truk, for expected repairs when intercepted in the Solomon Island's 'slot' by two patrolling USN subs that fired nearly all of their torpedoes into these vessels. Each ship managed to survive and progress on to Truk with gaping holes in flooded cargo spaces temporarily eliminating further use as freight carriers.

The Seiko was repaired and positioned at Truk's 4th Fleet Anchorage awaiting service when her luck finally ran out during the February attack with an aerial torpedo into her portside boiler room, taking her quickly down by the stern.

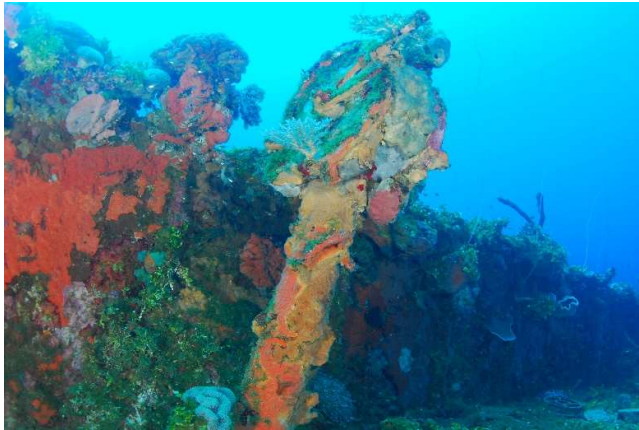
The 5385 ton Seiko Maru was built in 1940 by the Harima Zosensho, Aioi. She was 392 ft long with a 53 ft beam and had 2DR geared turbines into a single shaft. She was attacked on the 17th February 1944 while at anchor near the northern tip of Etan in the 4th fleet anchorage, by aircraft from Enterprise then later from Essex.

Her silhouette would suggest that she was s an oiler (like the Shinkoko) but in fact she was a general cargo vessel designed for heavy lift cargos. Again being a deeper wreck she lacks the coral growth of the Shinkoko, Sankisan or Hanakawa, but this does not distract from the qualities of the wreck.



Initial impression is of how intact the ship looks-her masts vent stacks and funnel all sit upright as does the heavy lifting derricks which flank the holds. One unusual feature is a field gun situated at the bow-a makeshift

defence unlike the other bow guns fitted to most of the other wrecks. Like the winches it is covered in a heavy growth of coral. Other than lance torpedoes in no. 2 hold there is little below deck level worth a mention, until the stern where the engine room is situated and this is easily located by her upright stack and engine room skylights. Although the stern is damaged the engine room is accessible and worthy of a look. There are many store and accommodation rooms to explore with a good torch.



The centre island is perhaps the most rewarding area to visit with limited down time. The bridge is open-with the instrumentation still in place-rudderstand and telegraph, adorned in coral are bathed in good light-providing endless photo opportunities. Below this level are several more open areas to explore-more than enough for 2 dives. Haunting views of empty rooms with rows of portholes, light streaming in can be captured through the lens.

Standing proud above the wreck are her huge masts-and these provide an ideal slow ascent but from deck level provide a provocative vision. The masts are adorned with luxuriant coral growth, becoming thicker higher up the masts. The coral in turn provides a habitat for reef fishes and invertebrates.



SHINKOKO MARU



25 October 1938:

Kobe. Laid by Kawasaki Heavy Industries as a 10,020-ton merchant tanker for Kobe Sanbashi (Kobe Pier Co.) K. K.

13 December 1939:

Launched and named SHINKOKU MARU.

28 February 1940:

Completed and registered at Kobe. Her gross registered (GRT) tonnage and net registered tonnage (NRT) respectively are 10,020-tons and 5,832-tons. Her call sign is JYDN.

1940:Chartered by Kawasaki Kisen for oil transport services.

18 August 1941:Requisitioned by the IJN.

25 August 1941:Osaka. Conversion to a naval auxiliary begins at Naniwa Dockyard.

5 September 1941:Registered as an auxiliary oiler, (Ko) category under internal order No. 1025 and attached to the Kure Naval District with Kure as homeport. That same day, Captain Ito Tokutaka (39) (former CO of auxiliary transport FUJIKAWA MARU) is appointed Supervisor.

15 October 1941:

Rated as a Combined Fleet auxiliary transport.

27-28 October 1941:The Chief of Staff 1st Air Fleet, Rear Admiral (later Vice Admiral) Kusaka Ryunosuke (41)(former CO of AKAGI) arranges for oilers SHINKOKU and TOHO MARUs to join the 1st Air Fleet by about 10 November. In the meantime, the two oilers are equipped for refueling while under tow.

30 October 1941:Rear Admiral Kusaka signals SHINKOKU and KYOKUTO MARUs that when installation of gear for refueling and preparations for action have been completed, SHINKOKU MARU is to depart Sasebo and KYOKUTO MARU is to depart Kure on 13 November. Both oilers are to proceed to Kagoshima Bay on Kyushu. Further, they are to conduct refueling exercises with the 1st Air Fleet's carriers while enroute. Kusaka requests the oilers' COs to load fuel oil for refueling purposes before their departure.

10 November 1941:Kure. The Chief of Staff of the Kure Naval District advises Rear Admiral Kusaka that arrangements have been made to reequip oilers SHINKOKU, KENYO, KOKUYO and KYOKUTO MARUs for simultaneous port and starboard refueling by 13 November.

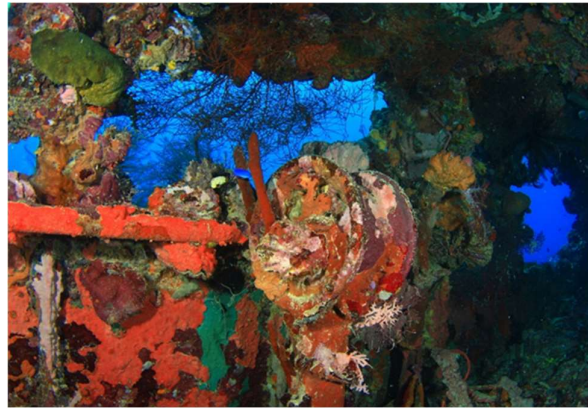
7 July 1943:At about 1700, SHINKOKU MARU is attacked by LtCdr William T. Nelson's USS PETO (SS-265) at 00-37N, 148-06E. Nelson fires three torpedoes and claims two hits in a submerged attack, but SHINKOKU MARU is actually hit by only one torpedo in the bow. It floods fuel oil tank No. 2 holding 1,400 tons of light oil.

14 February 1944:Arrives at Truk. Transfers oil to auxiliary oiler TONAN MARU No. 3.

17-18 February 1944: While anchored NW of Fefan Island, SHINKOKU MARU is hit amidships by a bomb dropped by Douglas SBD "Dauntless" dive-bombers from USS YORKTOWN (CV-10). Grumman TBF "Avengers" from USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17) drop six torpedoes on SHINKOKU MARU, but all their torpedoes miss.

18 February 1944: In the early hours, TBFs from USS ENTERPRISE (CV-6) drop a near-miss bomb on the starboard side near the engine room that opens the hull and sinks SHINKOKU MARU. She comes to rest upright in relatively shallow water. 86 men are killed including 16 of the crew.

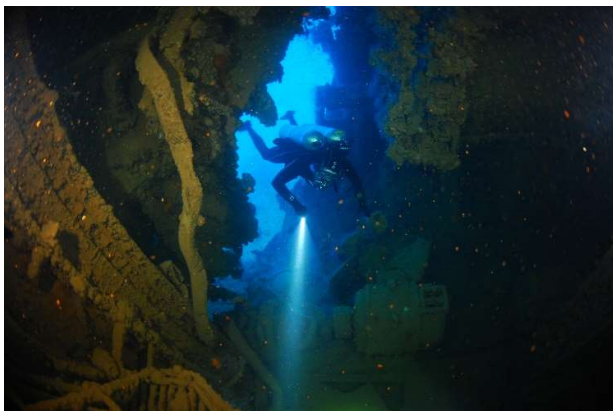
THE WRECK TODAY. This is the second largest wreck in Truk. The Shinkoku Maru was built in 1940 by Kawasaki Jyuko Co. of Kobe for Kobe Sanbashi K.K. (Kobe Pier Co. Ltd). It is 150 metres long and 20 metres wide and was requisitioned by the Japanese Navy in 1941, four weeks before Pearl Harbour. This is in my opinion the greatest shipwreck in the world! It has everything a diver could wish for; depths range from 35 metres to 11. She is totally covered in incredible marine life, bold, upright and bathed in light and offers some of the most rewarding internal exploration of any wreck. It can be a 1st, 2nd or 3rd dive of the day and an 80 minute dive is not uncommon. .

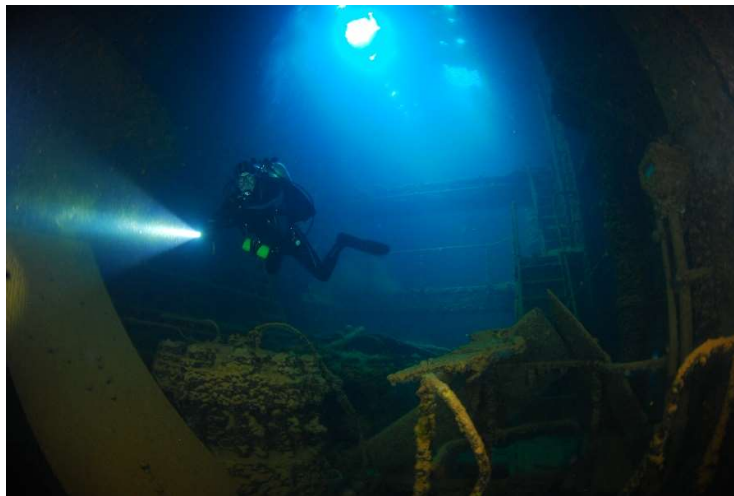
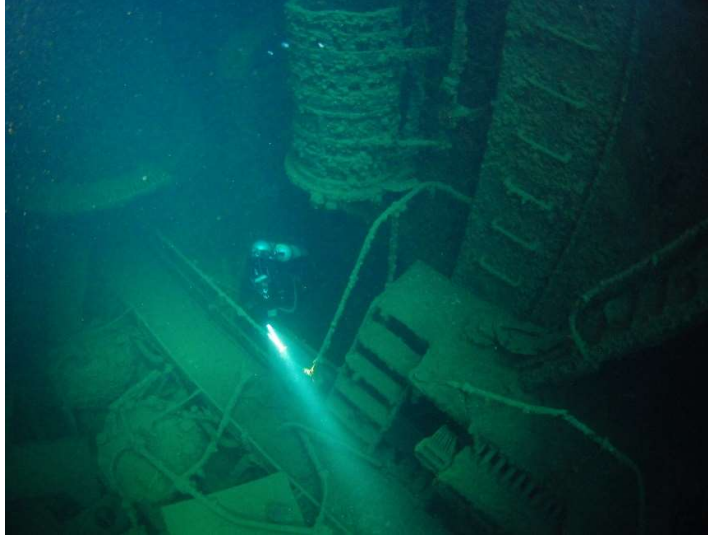


Its easy to start here-in the shallow bridge area her instrumentation sits awaiting further orders-3 telegraphs, rudderstand, voice pipes, compass gimbal

Even a tour of the pipe bridges is a dive in its own right-these walkways connect the center island for and aft and the lattice work supports are smothered in marine life. There are several pump rooms are an exciting dive into her very bowels. The entrance to the engine room, via the torpedo hole is a memorable experience and an entire dive can be spent in here alone. It's a wreck you never tire off. The stunning electric blue antheas dance around the corals inviting the photographer to take yet another shot of this stunning world.

The best place to start is through her torpedo hole. Enter here through this man made cavern into her engine room. A whole world of workshops machinery and gauges will challenge your deco time, but a slow ascending route through the many sections of the engine room passes many features. On the following page are a few examples of the stunning scenes in this huge power house.





Slowly ascending up through stairwells to the deck level reveals an incredible site-an operating table. Original artifacts plus some animal bones have been placed on the table for effect-there are no human remains!



More stairwells lead up through her floors to the bridge area, and again here is a mind blowing scene, not one but three telegraphs lie surrounded by a dense forest of corals. Only yards away the king post leads the way to the surface-and deco stops as long as your air lasts.

A 70 minute dive (eanx 32 @1.5) you will want to repeat time and time again-and this is only her stern! She lies in open water North West of Fetan.



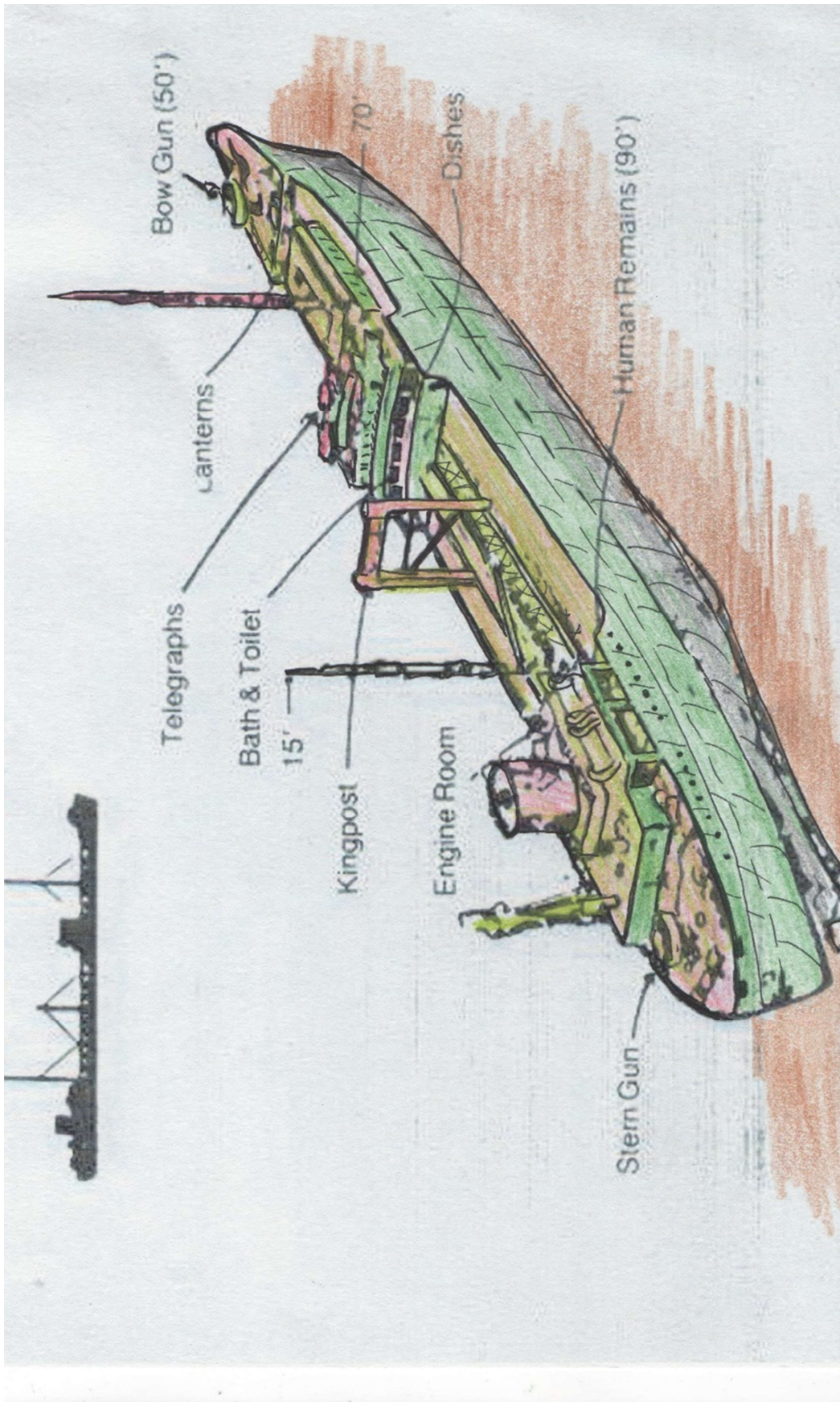
Taken prior to the bridge colapse a diver glides through the navigation deck to the telegraph



2021 update. Despite the fact that these wrecks have been underwater for over 75 years they have withstood the test of time. Up until the 2018 visit the only noticeable damage to the wrecks was the bridge of the Fujikawa Maru, caused by a liveboards anchor. Sadly we now find the top section of the Shikoko's bridge has collapsed.

According to our dive team at Blue Lagoon it happened during a recent storm. The damage while noticeable to those of us who visit her often, will not distract from the sheer beauty of this part of the wreck. Lets hope it is an isolated case.





SHOTAN MARU



Although one of the smaller and less dived wrecks in the lagoon the Shotan Maru, like the San Fransisco Maru has a certain nostalgic appeal about her. Built in 1943 she was 285 ft long, 1999 tons and fitted with triple expansion engines. Anchored in the fourth fleet anchorage she was a victim of Dauntless dive bombers from Enterprise. Almost British in appearance 4 holds and no H posts, if records didn't show otherwise she could



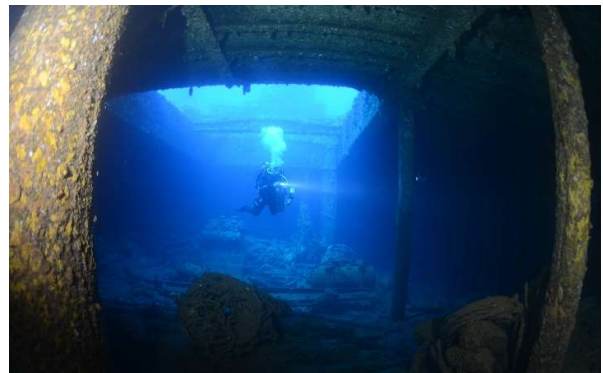
well have been captured at Singapore and put into service for the IJN. Her wooden decks have either disintegrated or been consumed by fire and thus has taken on a skeletal appearance amidships where her superstructure is found.

The bow lacks a gun but the winch is quick a sight totally covered in coral and her gear wheel appears flame red in strobe light. Only her location indicates what she is so distorted by coral and concretions.

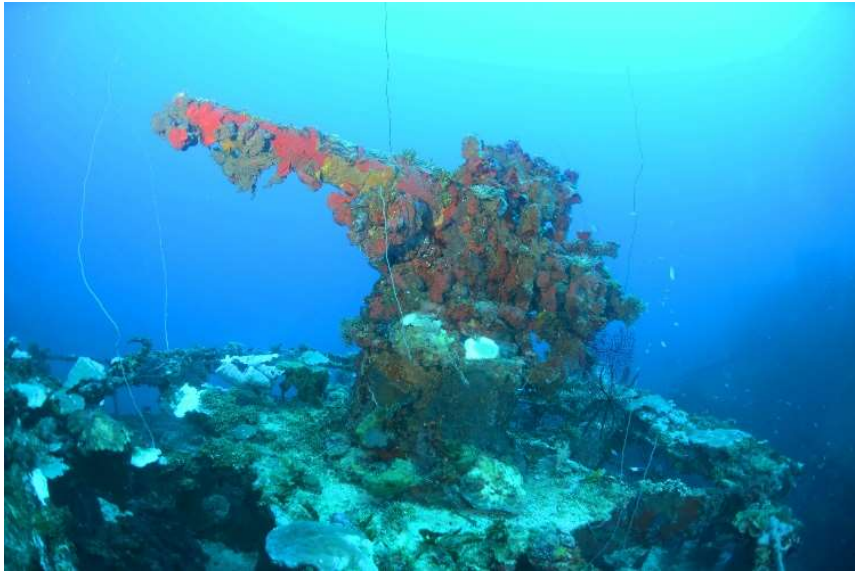
The forward hold appear empty but contain shells, ammunition, rolls of re- enforced mesh, grenades ,bottles

and bags of cement all in a on fused jumble amidst the silt. Parts of several construction vehicles now lie in the holds, once positioned on deck. The holds are still quite large and it is possible to swim through into #2 hold where a portable compressor sits on a chassis along with other machinery. Coils of rope, truck chassis and more compressors can be found. But its deep in here and time is not a friend. Although the clarity is!

Separating the holds is the engine room, and above her main superstructure consisting of 3 floors and accommodation flanking the engine house. On top is a most imposing feature -her long thin funnel stands proud tall and erect surrounded by air scoops and the remains of two AA guns. There are many artefact such as crockery, cooking utensils and spent ammo. Another feature which suggests a British style vessel is a donkey boiler, an auxiliary boiler used when the ship has shut down the main boilers, to provide hot water for heating and showers.



The stern holds are badly damaged by the explosion, twisted steel, girders, plates and pipes and the stern mast, unlike the fore has fallen over, resting on the sloping reef off to starboard. The stern quarter, poop and weather deck has an anti aircraft gun, barrel pointing skyward covered in coral. Here also are the almost obligatory rudder post, steering and helm, directly over the steering quadrant one floor below. The wooden



spokes, long since gone leaving a brass hub covered in sea squirts and sponge and a metal ring. Voice pipes too have succumb to nature, their mouthpieces extended by barrel sponges. Again this is a superb wreck, rarely visited, Sitting in very clear water, looking looking a “real” wreck. Worthy of several dives.

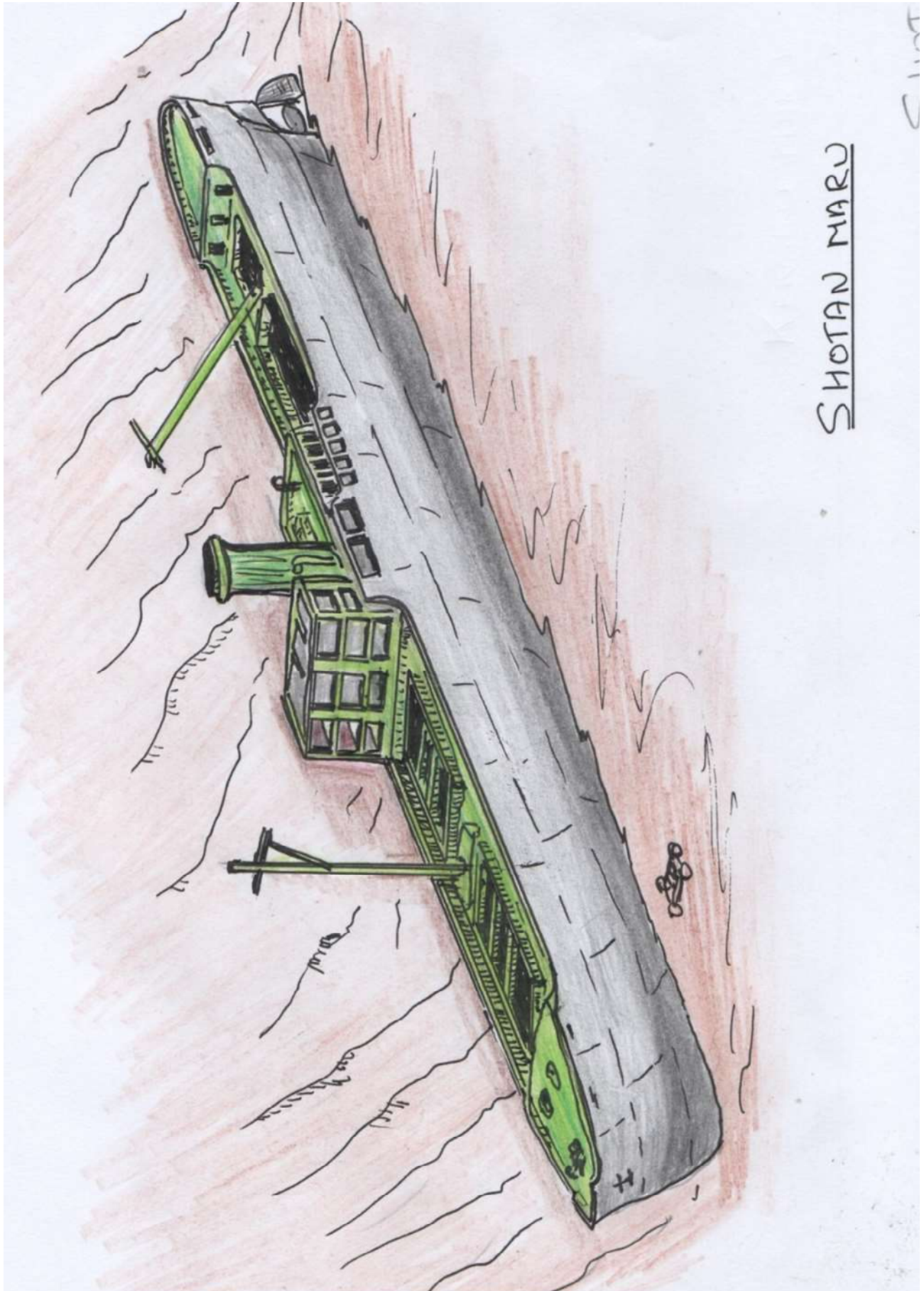
her gun remains pointing skyward, now covered in a carpet of corals



Bathed in strong sunlight her donkey boiler and engine room skylight sit aft of the bridge.



her tall thin funnels still stands proud



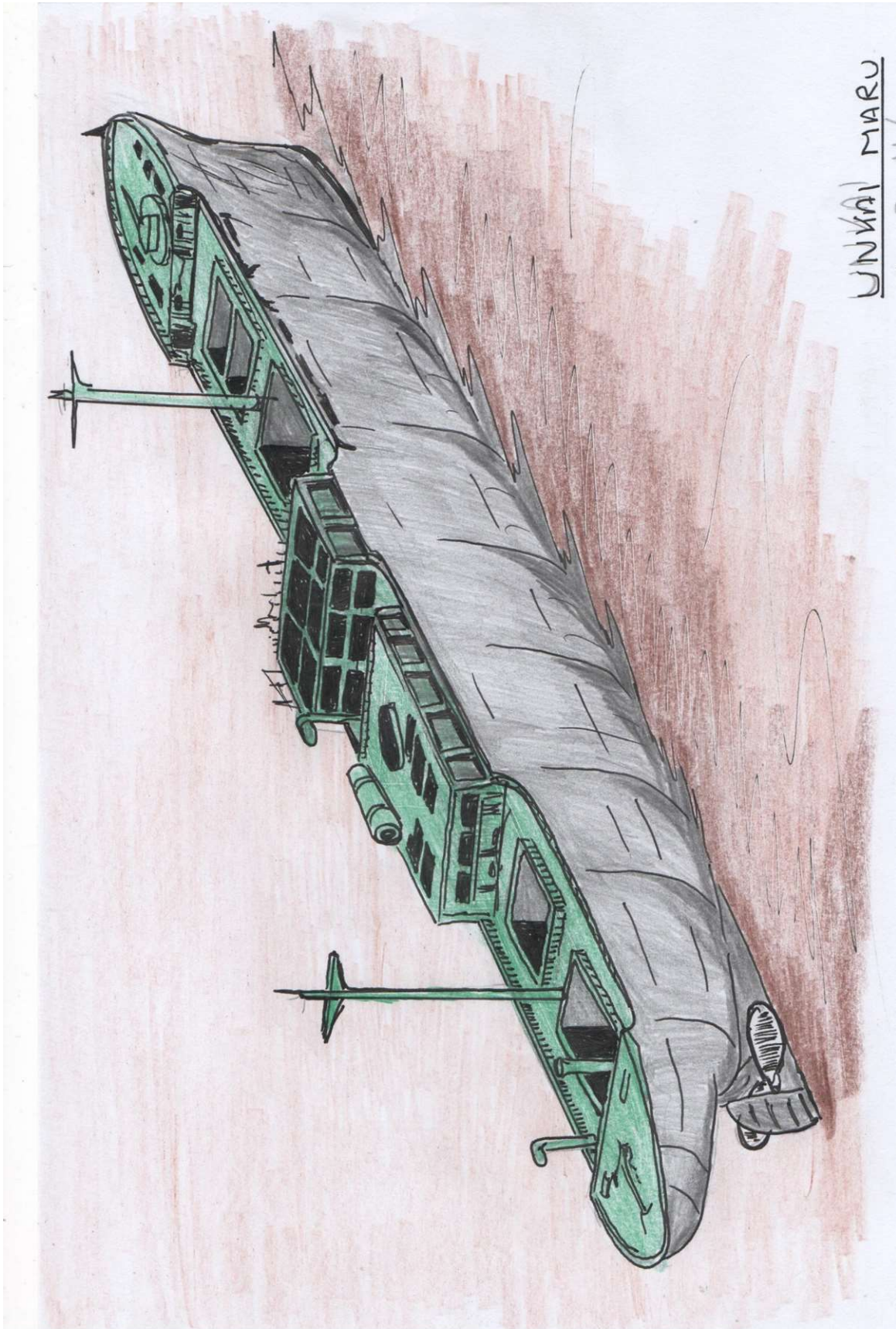
UNKAI MARU



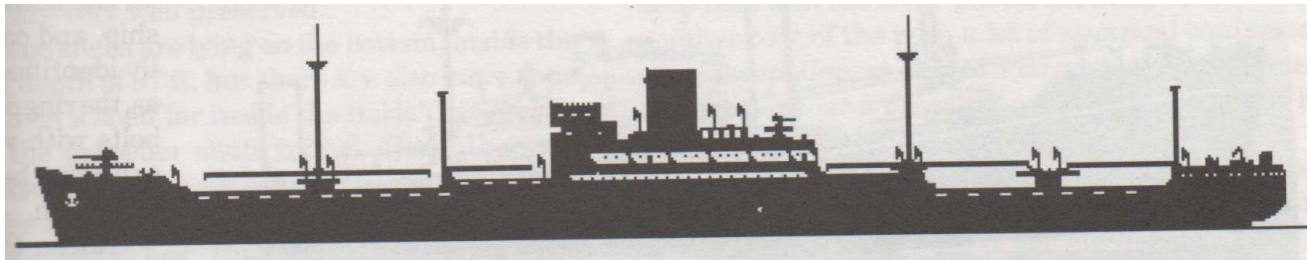
331 ft long, 3220 ton ex British steamer (ex Venus). She sits upright and almost intact. The raised foc's'le has an impressive bow gun. With all the wood either rotted or burned away the skeletal framework allows for easy penetration. The main superstructure is accessed by two doors on the main deck and the upper level contains a telegraph and rudder stand. Her tall funnel now flanks the engine room. Access to the engine room is from the skylight ventilators aft of the bridge. There are lamp rooms and all the valves, wheels and working areas they were when she was afloat. There are four floors to explore. The stern too is a delight, with an intricate steering quadrant housed under the weather deck, Corals abound and the ascent up the mast is a dive in its own right. Over shadowed by the larger wrecks, the Unkai is a great dive for those privileged with a longer stay. She is situated North East of Uman.



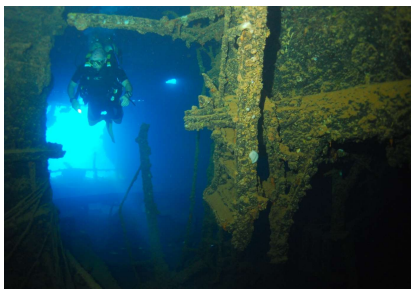




YAMAGARI MARU



439ft, 6438 ton passenger cargo ship, built in 1939. She was the depot ship for the IJN YAMATO, one of two giant battleships based in Truk before the attack. Huge shells still remain inside the wreck, which lies on its side. A huge hole in the hull is testimony to the bombs which sent her to the bottom. Her massive engine room is a must. Swimming “down” through 5 floors without getting any deeper can be quite disorienting, while the whole exterior of her upper (starboard side) is a living reef. Nice stern telegraph. Lies to the north of Fetan. Max depth 32 metres (seabed).



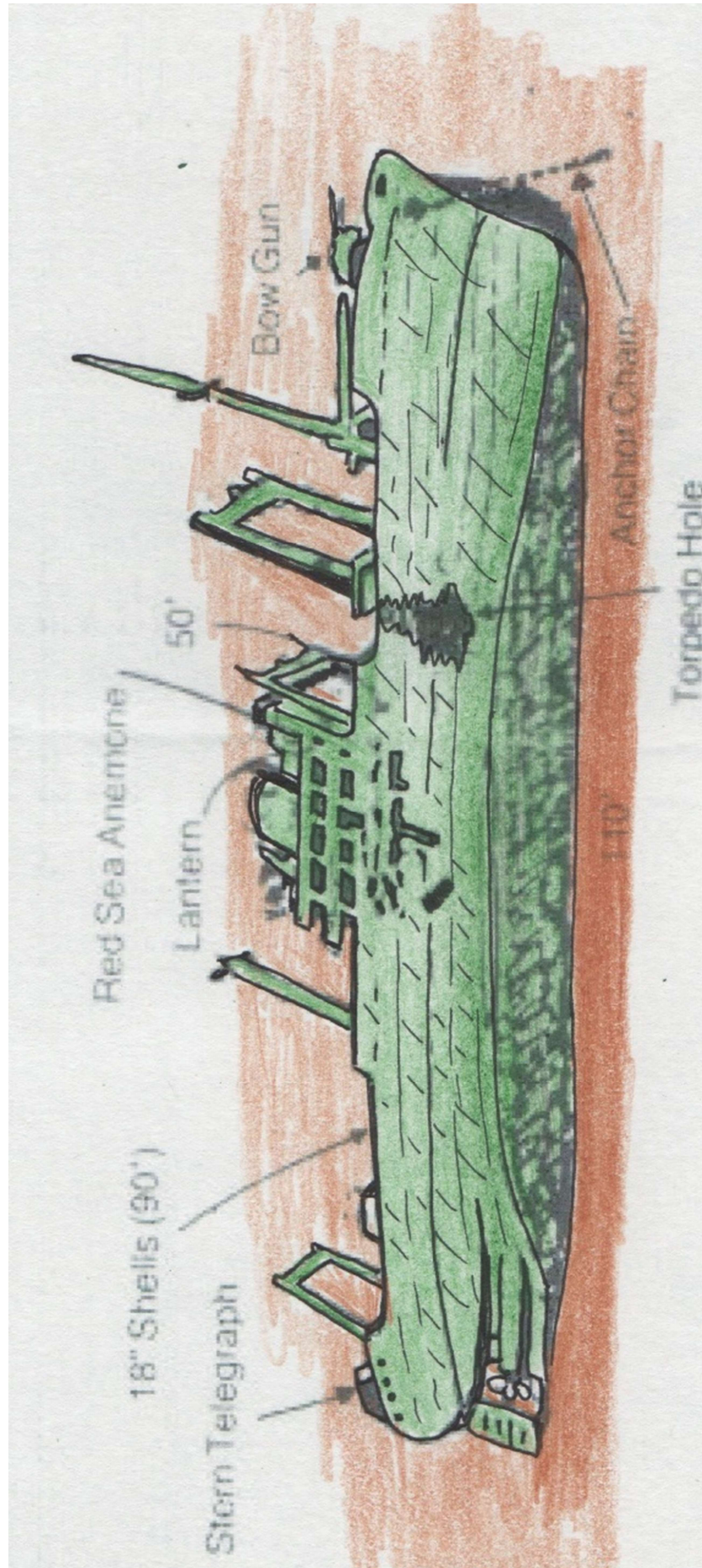
The massive engine room is a must for visiting divers to explore.





A reminder that she was the supply-depot ship for the worlds largest battleship, the IJN YAMATO, huge 23" shells can still be seen stacked in her holds





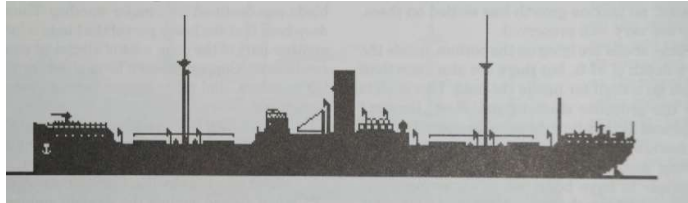
YUBAE MARU

Built: 1919 by Ishikawajima Shipbuilding & Engineering, Aioi ,engines by: Ishikawajima Shipbuilding & Engineering, Aioi tonnage: 3217 grt; dimensions: 93 x 13.4 x 8.3 m .Triple expansion tandemised steam engine. speed: 8.5 knots

yard no.: 316 .initial owners

Suzuki Shoken Gk, Kobe

Requisitioned by the IJN in 1941 as a military transport, operating throughout the pacific bases.



She arrived in Truk one week prior to the American attack, being berthed in the fourth fleet anchorage after unloading supplies. On the 17t Feb she was hit by a 1000lb bomb from an aircraft from Bunker Hill, then torpedoed, before finally sinking.

THE WRECK TODAY; she lies on a slope, bow down in 37 mtrs, with the stern slightly higher in 32 mtrs. lying on her port side. An attitude which aids dive planning. The forward gun and platform lie on the seabed, evidence of the bow down impact. Her anchor winch remains on the fo'c'sle deck. The usual two door access into the lamp room and stores, created by the raised fo'c'sle style of her bow section. With no cargo

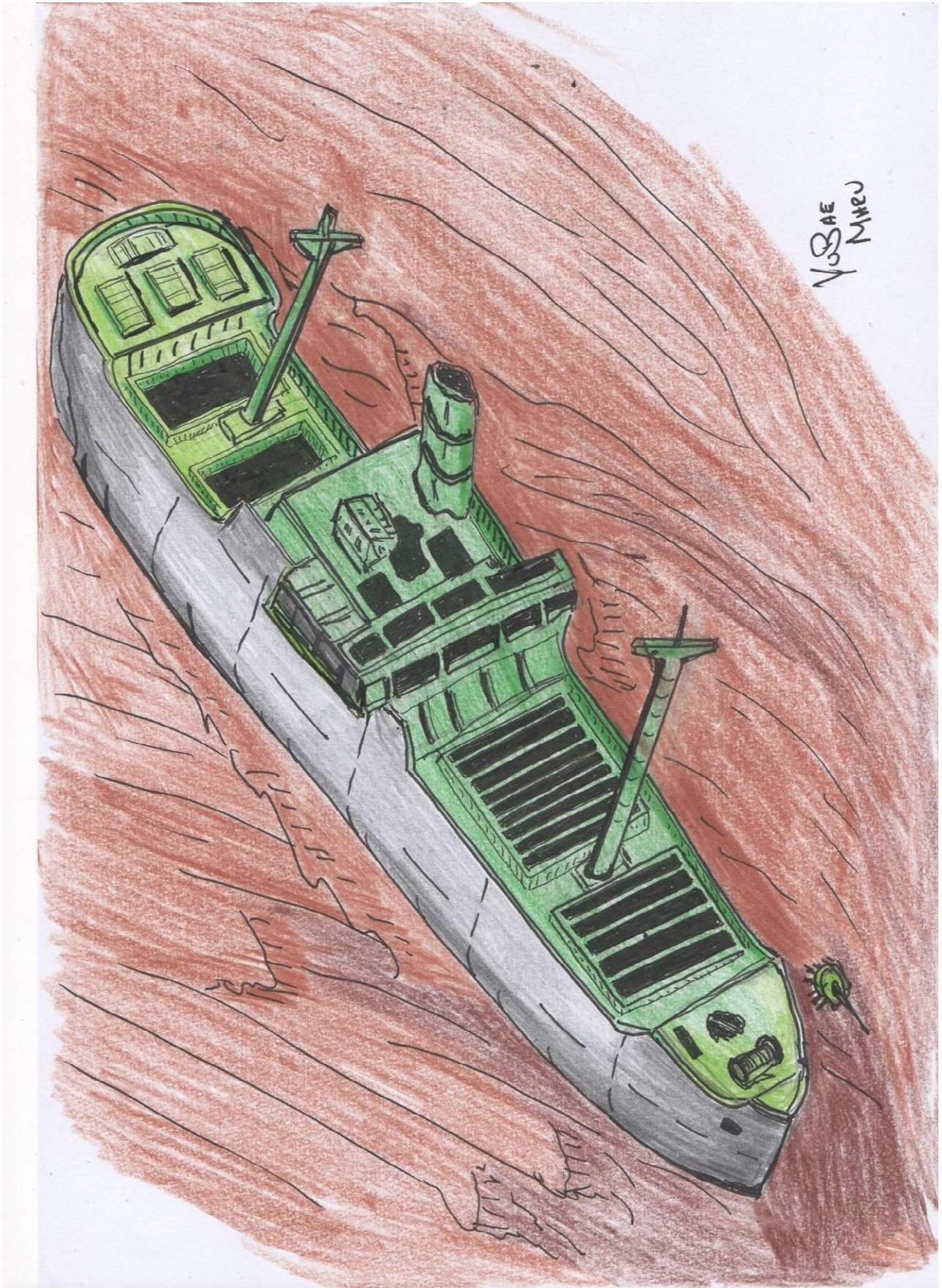


and empty holds the engine room is perhaps the highlight of the dive—despite the disorientating angle. Two inboard



companionways flank the superstructure and access can be gained via these or indeed through stairwells in the bridge rear. The funnel has collapsed, but the

engine room is, like most other wrecks virtually intact—catwalk gratings workshops control panels repeater telegraphs, all make up a surreal scene, and good natural light percolates through. The shallowest aspects of the wreck are her stern castle with emergency steering quadrant and helm. Prop and rudder lie partially buried in 33 mtrs.



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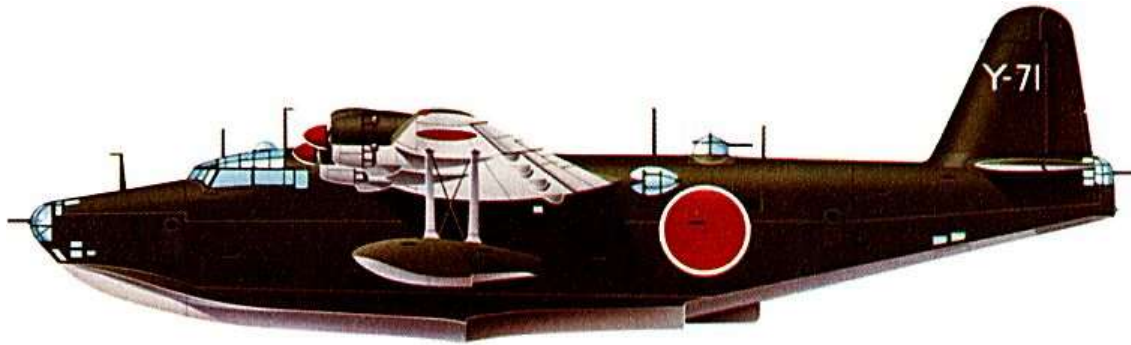
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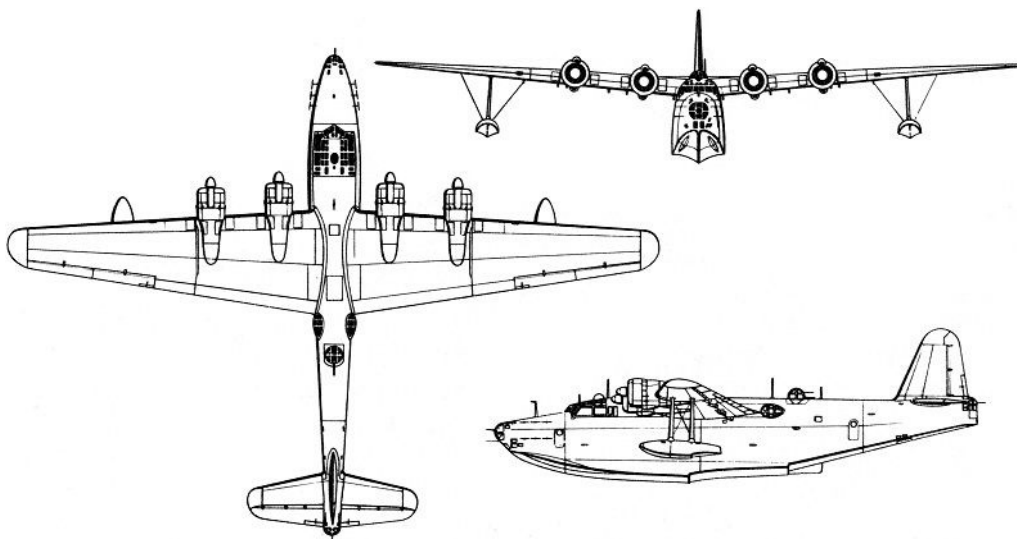
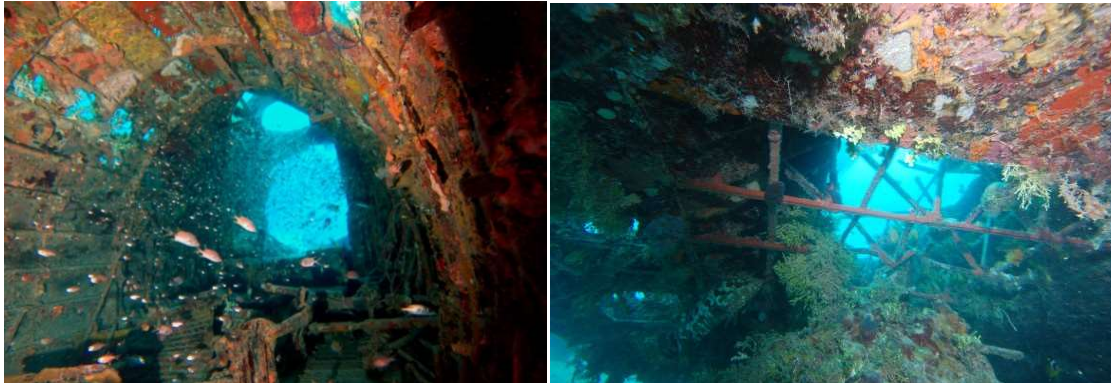
THE AIRCRAFT

KAWANISHII H8K2 “Emily” Flying boat |

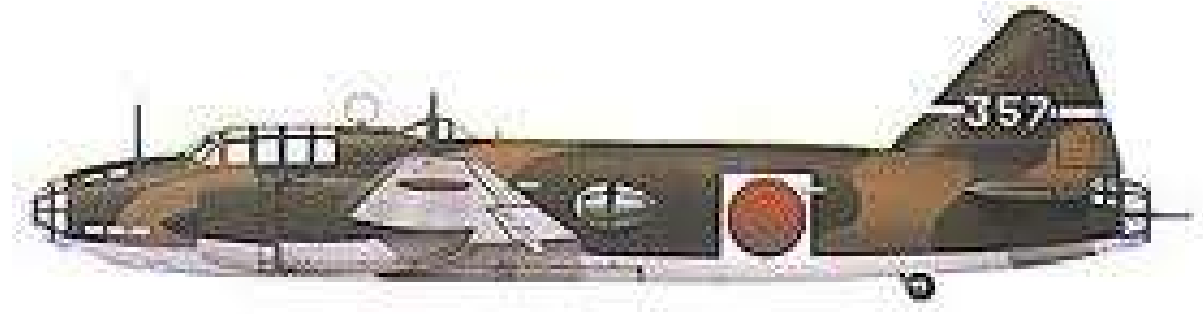


Length: **28,1** metres, Built: **after August 1941**, Weight: **34.000 lb**

The wreck of the Kawanishi H8K1 “Emily” flying boat lies upside down at a depth of 16 metres. She has a wing span of 38 metres and a length of 28 metres. She was a large aircraft, but is nevertheless a small wreck, but this does not prevent a great dive, especially with a camera. Check out the engines floats, cockpit and colourful interior as well as the encrusted wing sections. Makes a great third dive.



BETTY BOMBER



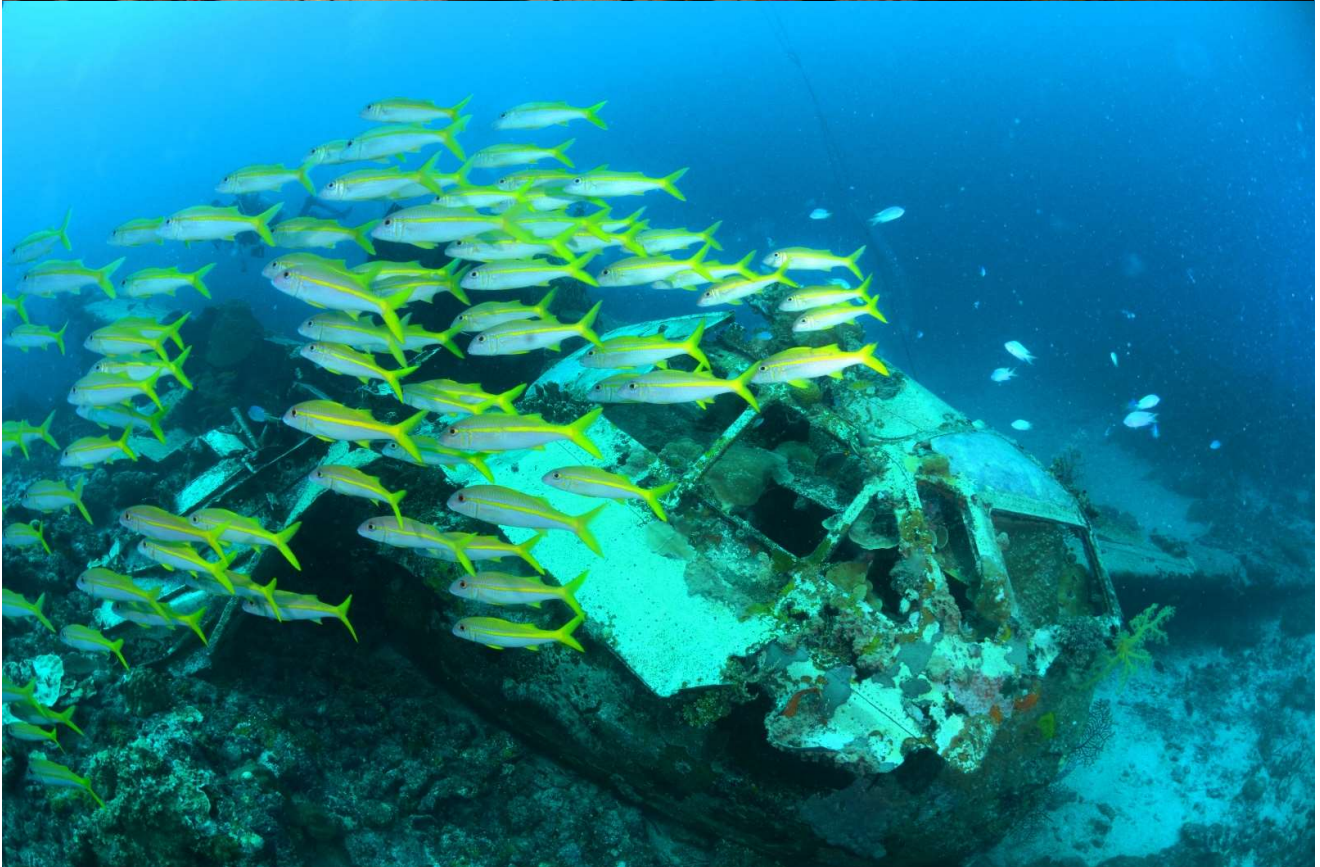
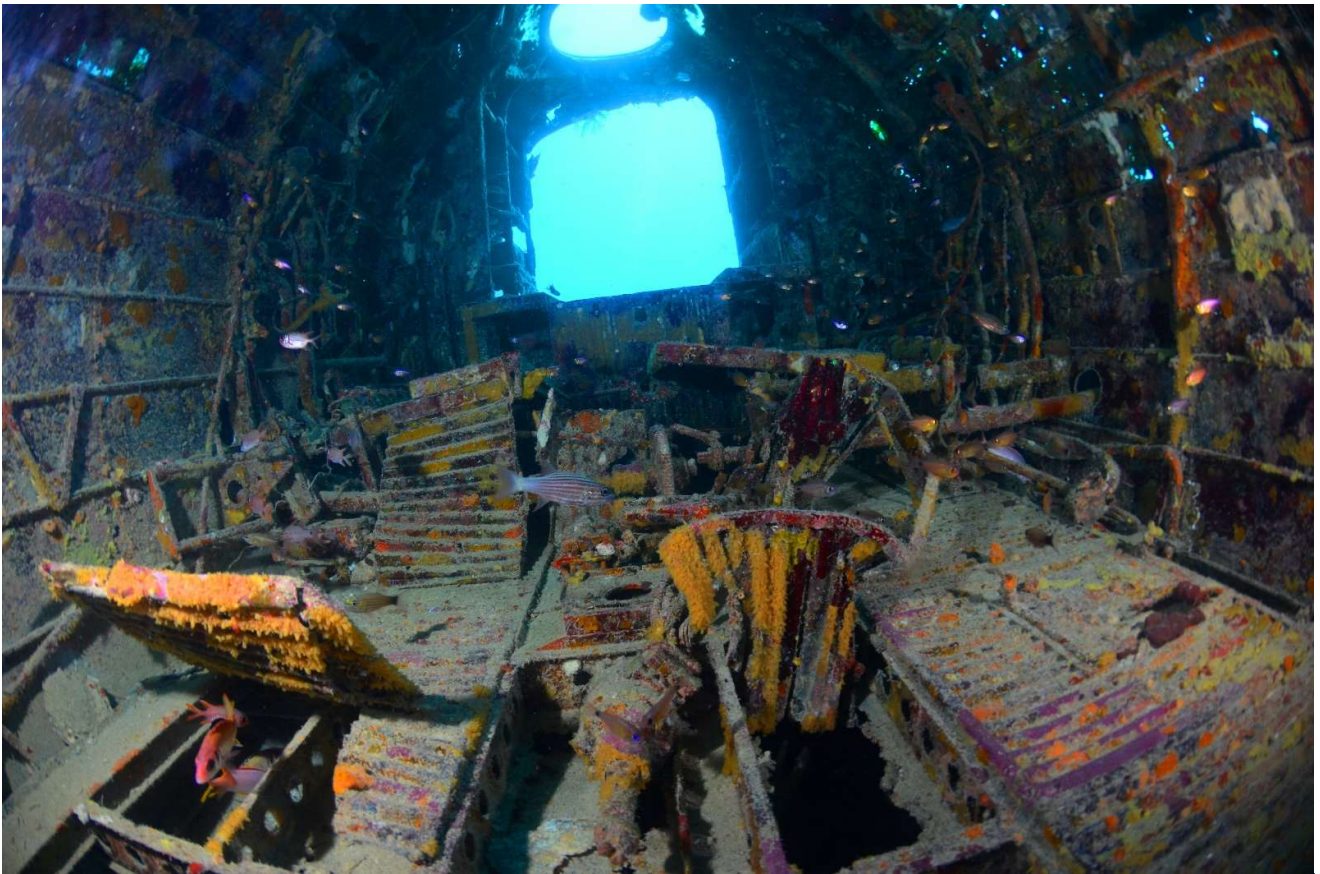
The Mitsubishi G4M Type 1 land-based attack aircraft was the main twin-engine, land-based bomber used by the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service in World War II. The Allies gave the G4M the reporting name of Betty. The Allies usually gave Japanese fighters and floatplanes "male" names, while giving "female" names to bombers and reconnaissance aircraft. These did not come into general use until mid-1943.

The G4M had a range of over 3,700 miles achieved by structural lightness and an almost total disregard for armour protection. This proved to be its weakness when Allied opposition increased in the later stages of World War II

Lying close to Etan Island airstrip, this wreck is fairly intact, save for her broken off nose and tail fin, and her engines, which lie forward of the wreckage, presumable the inertia of the crash forced them off their mountings.



This is a great third dive and something slightly different. Small groups are better and we usually split the group and ½ tank this with the Emily; two dives for the price of one! Great photo opportunities lies in 14 metres of water and attracts nice shoaling fish.



Aichi E13A Type 0 ("Jake")



Not far from the resort is a collection of some 4 aircraft-a couple of Zeros lie nestled in the depressions of the sea bed in only 14 mtrs. The most intact aircraft wreck here is the remains of a Aichi E13 Jake sea plane. The main fusilage sits upright and intact on the sea bed in 16 mtrs. Her floats are dispersed but the photographic opportunities abound, The interior is very colourfull and together with the other wrecks makes a good third dive.



NAKAJIMA C6N SAUIN(MYRT)

Once thought to be a JILL (Nakajima B6N TENZAN) This aircraft is in fact a Nakajima C6N SAIUN, code name MYRT.

KAWASIHI E15K SHIUN, Code name NORM

This is a new find in deep water, the plane is upright and virtually intact.

AMERICAN MIA'S



Project Recover located three World War II aircraft in Truk Lagoon. The team identified two SBD – 5 Dauntless divers and one TBM/F-1 Avenger torpedo bomber in the Truk Lagoon. Researchers from the School of Marine Science and Policy at the University of Delaware and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego, located the crash sites. Both are co-founding partners with Project Recover. The downed aircraft are associated with seven WWII MIAs.

Project Recover conducted four missions in Truk from April 2018 through December 2019. They spent a total of 50 days on the water and surveyed 27 square miles of the ocean floor at depths from 100 to 215' deep. The underwater searches are accomplished by repetitive surveys with side-scan sonar on autonomous underwater robotic technology launched from small dive boats. Once non-natural debris on the seafloor is detected by sonar, divers and underwater robots with advanced imaging systems further investigate the sites. Three of the 61 sites interrogated revealed U.S. aircraft.

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Shark Dives



It's fair to say that Truk is not regarded as a shark location but on our recent trips we have found two excellent sites not far from our base. In both cases we didn't have long to wait for the action to begin. It was almost instantaneous! Shark Reef is a submerged coral mount surrounded by sand with a sloping sea bed to 20 metres. The more photogenic is Shark Island, a tiny sandy island covered in trees. Grey reef and black tip reef sharks are common at both sites and become very inquisitive as the dive progresses. Shark Island is an adrenaline rush. This year, (September 14) we were surrounded by over 50 greys and 20 reef sharks, sharks and dozens of pilot fish. At the base of the island a coral block rises up and greys come in to be cleaned. A great final dive.



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The E book concept

The idea of the E BOOK series came about after seeing so many incorrect publications quoting the wrong identity of the Tile Wreck at Abu Nuhas in the Red Sea. Despite a plethora of undeniable facts presented by myself and members of the Red Sea Wreck Academy, self proclaiming experts still, for reasons known only to themselves, continued to quote the MARCUS as the CHRISOULA K. It was archive photographs from Howard Rosenstien and the location of the ships bell, which added weight to Stephan Jablonski's accounts of the sinkings'. This new material gave us enough to produce the first E book in 2008.

Being free from restrictions it soon found its way around the world and was passed on from diver to diver. It had the desired effect-Now more and more reports carry the correct identity.

It was also an opportunity to give something back to diving –and promote the forthcoming “EGYPTIAN SHIPWRECKS. ”The release of these books also marks 25 years in publication Of course there was also controversy over the identity and purpose of the RUSSIAN WRECK at Zabagad, and this lead to the second title.

Tourist authorities have noticed the importance of their assets-wrecks are living underwater museums, and commissions have flooded in from Leros, Egypt, Truk, Palau and Busuanga, to name but a few “promoting tourism through shipwrecks” has become our mission statement, and by the end of 2020 we will have completed 25 titles in the series. We intend to update the guides annually-all free in readable format (72dpi) and in hi res, printable versions from the deeplens website for a small fee.

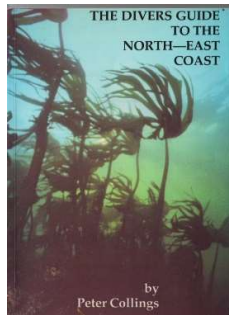
So now we have a total of 23 titles available, (and several more on the way), yours to enjoy and pass on-to anyone who may be interested- with my compliments and don't forget we run regular expeditions and safaris to all these featured Wrecks...The project has only just begun....

PETER COLLINGS

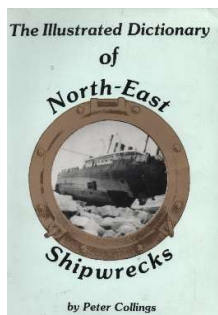
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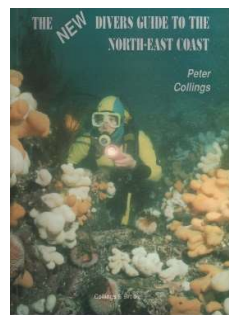
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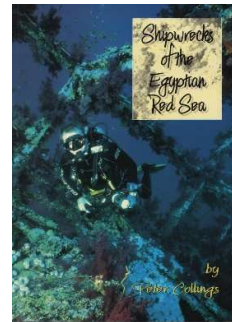
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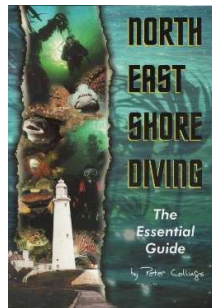
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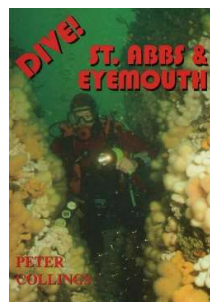
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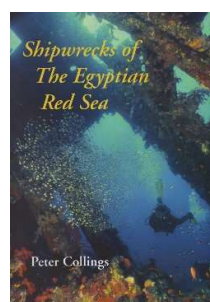
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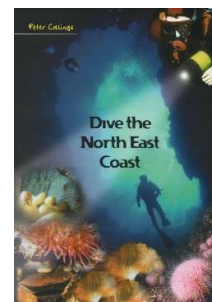
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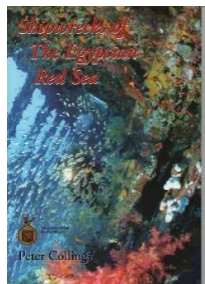
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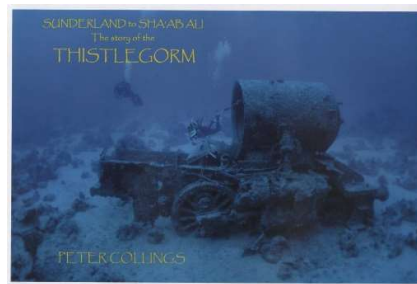
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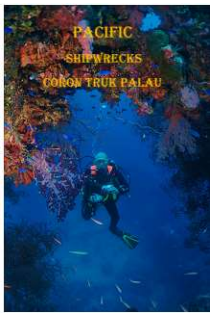
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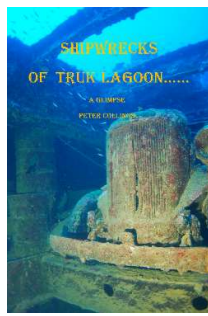
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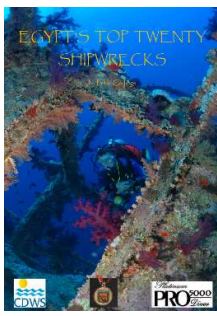
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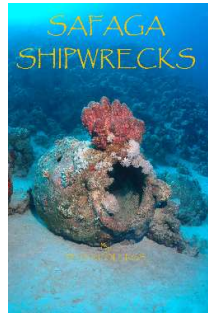
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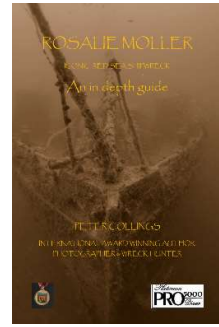
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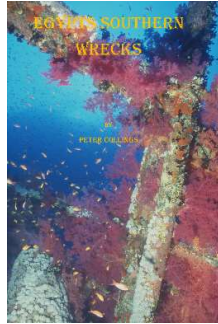


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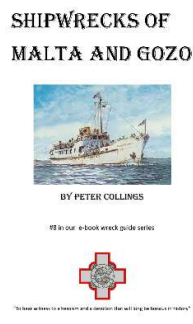
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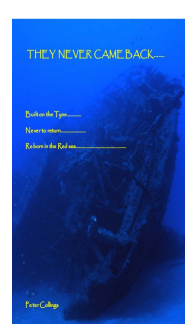
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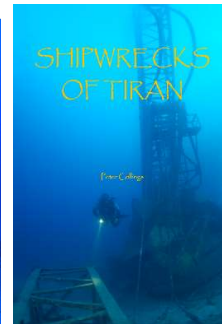
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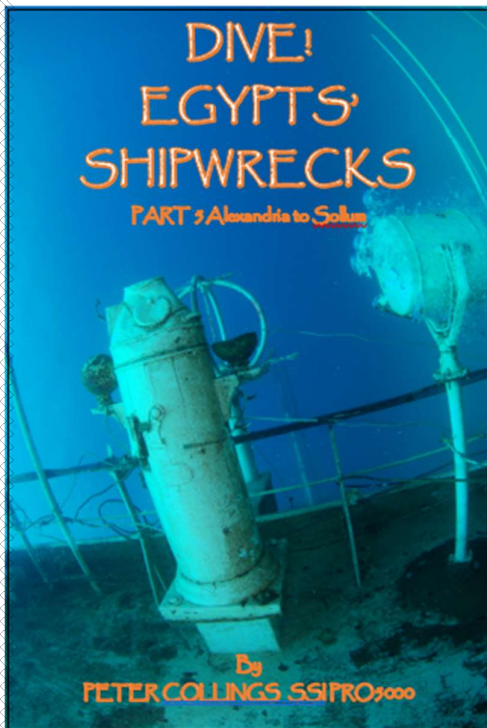
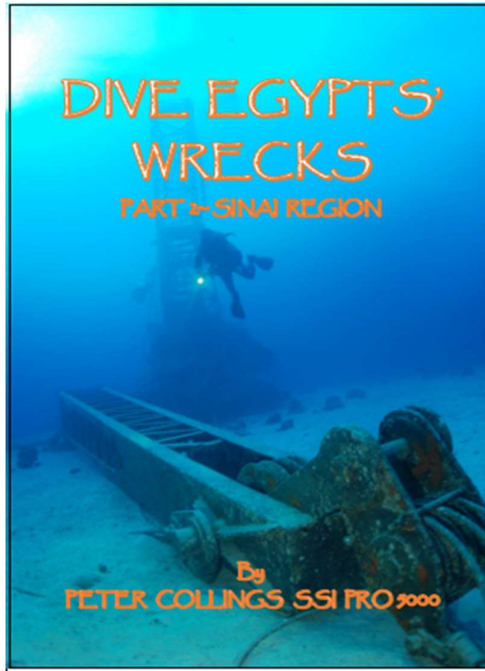
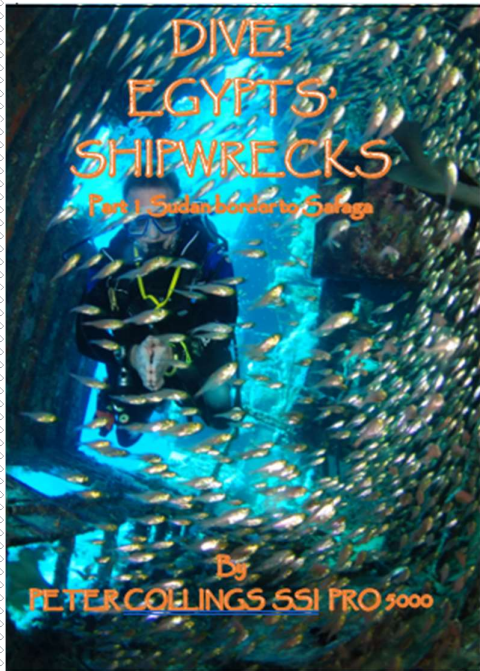


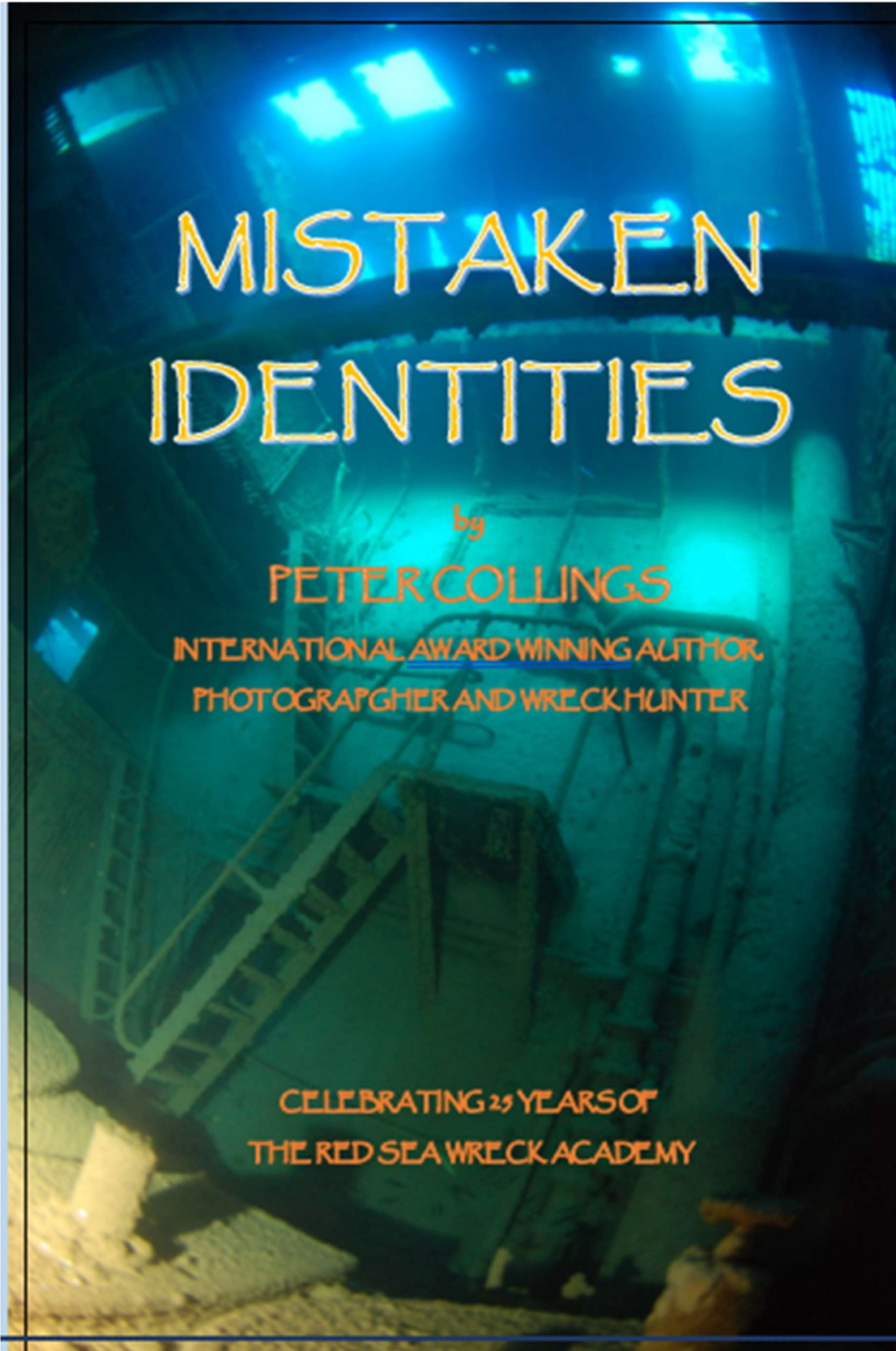
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Peter began diving in 1970. In 1983 he wrote the first of 12 diving related books and has won several international awards for his publications and underwater photography. His articles and photographs have appeared consistently through the international diving press, including SCUBA WORLD, DIVER, DIVE, SPORT DIVER, SCOTTISH DIVER, H2O, TAUCHEN DYKE & OCTOPUS

A BSAC Advanced instructor, (*Red Sea Wreck Academy*) SSI PRO 5000 DIVER and TDI Advance Trimix diver, Peter has lead over 500 wreck and photo safaris around the world, logging over 6700 dives, and along with his regular team of experts has located and identified many of the shipwrecks in Egyptian waters. To date Peter has written and published 30+ diving related guide books



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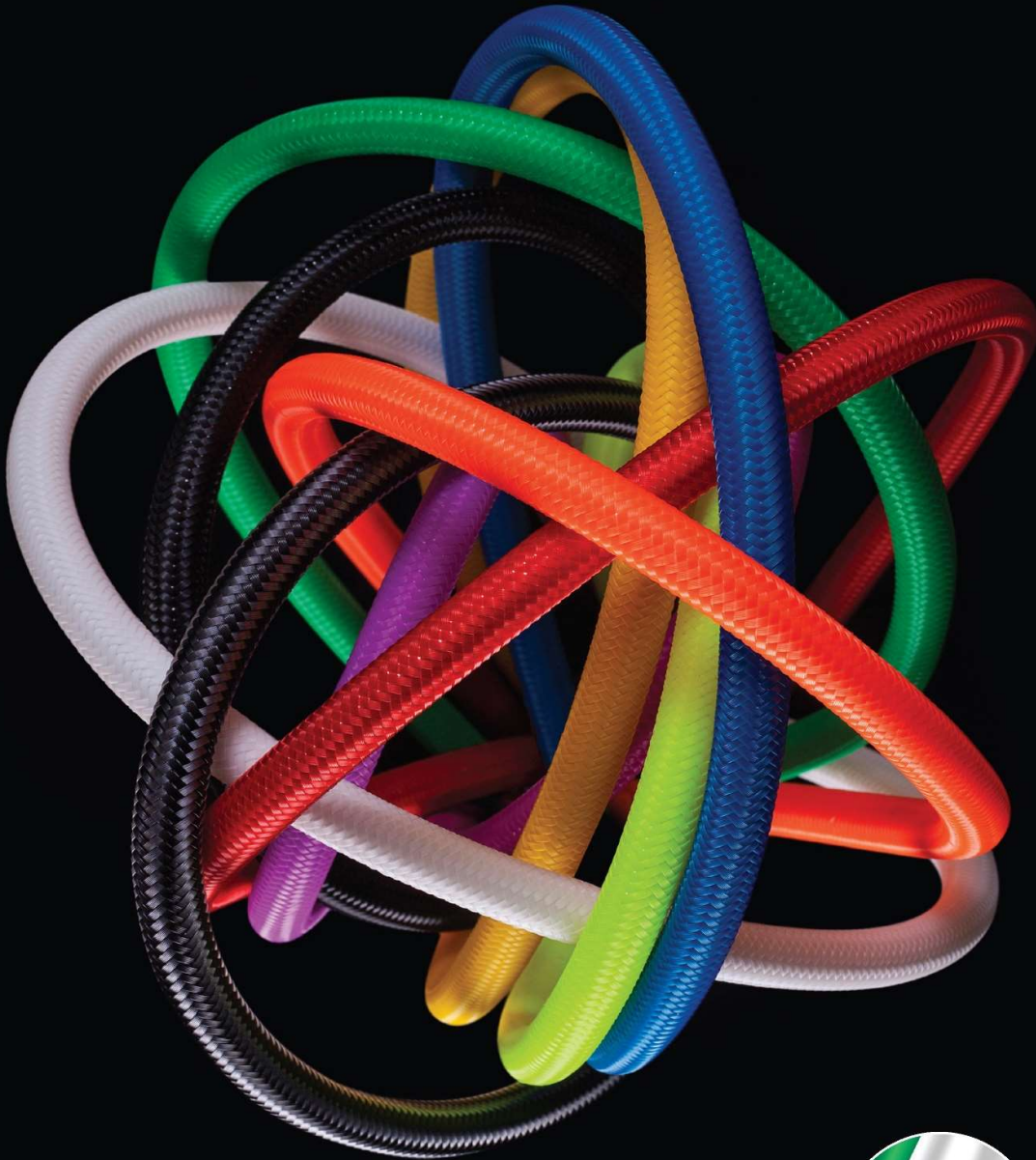
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