

## Roy Cella saw it happen

I was on the bridge of the USS Sumner, helping preparations for colors.

The first Japanese plane flew over us about 0755 and banked to the right toward Battleship Row. Just prior to this pass, we had heard large explosions coming from Ford Island. We did observe planes in the air, and to a man questioned the Army flying on Sunday. Very unusual to say the least.

By the time a second plane made a pass, we were at General Quarters, and one of our gunners was fortunate enough to get a direct hit off our starboard quarter. The plane went up in one large ball of fire, and immediately dropped into the water. Several days later a small floating crane retrieved the skeleton and all that remained, was the radial engine. wing tips and part of the tail. The rest of the skin was gone, and only a faint framework visible.

My battle station was on a Range Finder, and in view of the air attack, had little to do. However, shortly after the attack began, all ships were ordered to send boats to the ammo depot. I had been qualified as a boat captain, in spite of my rating Quartermaster Second Class, and upon ordered from the C.O., manned one of our boats and proceeded across the harbor.

By this time, probably 0820, the Arizona was on the bottom and the Oklahoma rolling over. The Cage Mast Wagons, i.e. West Virginia Class, were on fire, and the Nevada was getting underway. I had served on the Nevada from 1937 to 1939, and had a lot of shipmates onboard.

During one of our trips hauling ammunition, I ran close aboard the Nevada, as she was being beached on Nevada Point ( Hospital Point ) The dive bombers were giving her a real working over, as it appeared she was going to get out of the harbor. However, orders had gone out to beach her, rather than chance blocking the narrow channel to the sea. Several bombs exploded on the forecastle, knocking out a couple of AA guns over the side, as well as several of the crew.

We ran ammunition all day, all over the harbor, and after awhile, the thick bunker fuel that covered the harbor began to plug up our cooling water intake, and we secured the boat. During the attack the Curtis sighted what they said was a "Miniature Japanese Sub" they fired at it, as well as one of the Destroyers that were underway.

The Sumner was a Survey Ship, and had sweeping capacity and equipment. We were asked to sweep the area that it was felt the sub had sunk, and after a couple of passes, we found her, and once again a floating crane recovered the sub.

We were constantly strafed by the passing planes, as they came over us, after banking over the tank farm. We looked right into the twin guns, one on either wing, as they ran the length of the ship. fortunately, no casualties, only a lot of canvas, and wooden decks ripped up.

A couple of days after the attack, we were once again ordered to tend subs. A division came alongside and received tender services. In the mean we time loaded four 155mm AA guns, and four large searchlights, and shortly thereafter, 100 Marines. We got underway for Palmyra Island to reinforce the troops there, and return the civilians.

The Sumner spent the duration of the War in the Pacific, working with the amphibs, following the various attacks all the way to the Leyte gulf. We were involved in every landing from Guadalcanal to Leyte. The Sumner was decommissioned on 13 September 1946.