



Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

USS O-9 (SS 70)

June 20, 1941 - 34 Men Lost

USS O-9 (SS-70) was lost on 20-Jun-1941 with the loss of 34 officers and men when it foundered off Isle of Shoals, 15 miles from Portsmouth, NH.



- Keel laid down by Fore River Shipbuilding Co., Quincy, MA, February 15, 1917;
- Launched: January 27, 1918; Sponsored by Mrs. Frederick C. Sherman;
- Commissioned: July 27, 1918 with Lt Oliver M. Read, Jr. in command
- Decommissioned: June 25, 1931;
- Recommissioned: April 28, 1941.



During the final months of WWI, USS O-9 (SS-70) operated on coastal patrol and protected the Atlantic coast from U-boats. She departed Newport, RI, 2 November 1918 for European waters, but the termination of hostilities brought the 20-sub force she was part of back to the U.S.

After the war, O-9 continued in Naval service and trained submarine crews at the sub school at New London. Proceeding to Coco Solo, Canal Zone in 1924, the boat was reclassified to a 2nd line sub during her year there. Returning to

USS O-9 (SS 70)

operate at New London, O-9 reverted to a 1st line sub 6 June 1928. Sailing up to Kittery, ME, in January 1930, the sub returned to New London in March; the following February, she sailed to Philadelphia, to decommission there 25 June 1931.

Remaining on the Navy List, O-9 was recalled to training service as U.S. involvement in WWII became more imminent. She recommissioned at Philadelphia 14 April 1941 and went to New London 31 May. O-9 was to see but brief pre-war duty, however.

On 19 June, O-9 departed New London with other O-boats, for tests off the Isle of Shoals. After the other 2 subs had successfully completed their tests 20 June, O-9 submerged at 0738 to conduct deep submergence tests; the sub did not surface thereafter but was crushed by the pressure of the water 402 feet below. The sub went down 15 miles off Portsmouth, in the area where USS SQUALUS (SS-192) had been lost.

Rescue ships swung into action immediately. USS O-6 (SS-67), USS O-10 (SS-71), USS TRITON (SS-201) and USS FALCON, plus other ships searched for the sub, and divers went down from 1300, 21 June until 1143, 22 June. Divers went to record depths for salvage operations but could stay but a brief time; salvage operations were cancelled as they were considered too risky. The boat was declared a total loss as of 20 June. On 22 June, Secretary of the Navy Knox conducted memorial services for the 34 officers and men lost on the boat.

The boat remains in the depths off Portsmouth.

Shipmates on Eternal Patrol in USS O-9 (SS-70):

Howard J. Abbot, LT(CO) / Marvin D. Barry, SA / W.R. Cannady, EM3 / William T. Crute, SA / B.A. Davis, RM3 / John E. Dufresne, MM1 / Charles L. Eagleton, SM3 / John H. Edwards, MA3 / H.T. Fost, QM2 / Edward G. Foster, MMC / James G. Fowler, MMC / Robert A. Gardner, TM3 / N. Gerser, SA / James G. Gillies, FN / Francis H. Golden, FA / F.A. Griffith, SA / Francis L. Gruen, TM2 / Francis J. Gunn, MM1 / Joe A. Hartzog, SC2 / Gaddis I. Hendy, RM1 / Walter J. Jaskowiak, FN / William C. Kaufman, MM2 / Levitt E. Krueger, TM3 / Allan H. Littleford, EM2 / Chester L. Miller, QM2 / Emile A. Ouelette, SA / Sam E. Sonnenburg, EMC / F.P. Schneider, F3 / James E. Strang, EMC / Thomas W. Tilliery, Jr., MM1 / Earl F. Varner, MMC / Bernard J. Venhaus, SA / Marks P. Wangsness, ENS / William C. Wolf, TMC