

= USS Guam (CB @-@ 2) =

USS Guam (CB @-@ 2) was an Alaska @-@ class large cruiser which served with the United States Navy during the end of World War II . She was the second and last ship of her class to be completed . The ship was the second vessel of the US Navy to be named after the island of Guam , an American territory in the Pacific . Due to her commissioning late in the war , Guam saw relatively limited service during the war . She participated in operations off Okinawa in March ? July 1945 , including providing anti @-@ aircraft defense for the carrier task force and conducting limited shore bombardment operations . She participated in sweeps for Japanese shipping in the East China and Yellow Seas in July ? August 1945 . After the end of the war , she assisted in the occupation of Korea and transported a contingent of US Army troops back to the United States . She was decommissioned in February 1947 and placed in reserve , where she remained until she was stricken in 1960 and sold for scrapping the following year .

= = Description and construction = =

Guam was authorized under the Fleet Expansion Act on 19 July 1940 , and ordered on 9 September . She was laid down on 2 February 1942 at the New York Shipbuilding in Camden , New Jersey . She was launched on 12 November 1943 , after which fitting @-@ out work was effected . The ship was completed by September 1944 , and she was commissioned into the US Navy on 17 September , under the command of Captain Leland Lovette . She cost the US Navy \$ 67 @,@ 053 @,@ 828 at her completion .

The ship was 808 feet 6 inches (246 @.@ 43 m) long overall and had a beam of 91 ft 1 in (27 @.@ 76 m) and a draft of 31 ft 10 in (9 @.@ 70 m) . She displaced 29 @,@ 779 long tons (30 @,@ 257 t) as designed and up to 34 @,@ 253 long tons (34 @,@ 803 t) at full combat load . The ship was powered by four General Electric geared steam turbine sets , each driving one propeller , and eight oil @-@ fired Babcock & Wilcox boilers rated at 150 @,@ 000 shaft horsepower (110 @,@ 000 kW) and a top speed of 33 knots (61 km / h ; 38 mph) . The ship had a cruising range of 12 @,@ 000 nautical miles (22 @,@ 000 km ; 14 @,@ 000 mi) at a speed of 15 kn (28 km / h ; 17 mph) . She carried four floatplanes , housed in two hangars , with a pair of aircraft catapults mounted amidships .

The ship was armed with a main battery of nine 12 inch L / 50 Mark 8 guns in three triple gun turrets , two in a superfiring pair forward and one aft of the superstructure . The secondary battery consisted of twelve 5 @-@ inch L / 38 dual @-@ purpose guns in six twin turrets . Two were placed on the centerline superfiring over the main battery turrets , fore and aft , and the remaining four turrets were placed on the corners of the superstructure . The light anti @-@ aircraft battery consisted of 56 quad @-@ mounted 40 mm (1 @.@ 6 in) Bofors guns and 34 single @-@ mounted 20 mm (0 @.@ 79 in) Oerlikon guns . A pair of Mk 34 gun directors aided gunlaying for the main battery , while two Mk 37 directors controlled the 5 @-@ inch guns and a Mk 57 director aided the 40 mm guns . The main armored belt was 9 in (229 mm) thick , while the gun turrets had 12 @.@ 8 in (325 mm) thick faces . The main armored deck was 4 in (102 mm) thick .

Guam was laid down on 2 February 1942 by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation , in Camden , New Jersey , launched on 12 November 1943 , and commissioned on 17 September 1944 . She received the first operational SC Seahawk floatplanes in October .

= = Service history = =

Guam left Philadelphia on 17 January 1945 , after completing her shakedown cruise off Trinidad . She proceeded through the Panama Canal to join the United States Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor , which she reached on 8 February . While there , Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal visited the ship . On 3 March , she departed Hawaii for Ulithi , where she joined her sister Alaska on 13 March . Shortly thereafter , Guam and the rest of Task Force 58 , the main strike force of the US Navy under the command of Admiral Arthur W. Radford , departed for a raid on the mainland Japanese islands

of Kyushu and Shikoku . Task Force 58 arrived off Japan on the morning of 18 March and was quickly attacked by Japanese kamikazes and bombers . Guam was detached from the unit to escort the badly damaged carrier Franklin back to port , which lasted until 22 March .

Guam then returned to Task Force 58 , assigned to Cruiser Division 16 , part of Task Group 58 @. @ 4 , and steamed to Okinawa . On the night of 27 ? 28 March , Guam and the rest of Cruiser Division 16 bombarded the airfield on Minamidait? . After concluding the bombardment , Guam returned to the carrier screen while they conducted operations off Nansei Shoto until 11 May . The ship then steamed to Ulithi for periodic maintenance and to replenish ammunition and supplies . She then returned to Okinawa , assigned to Task Group 38 @. @ 4 of William Halsey 's Third Fleet . She continued to provide anti @-@ aircraft defense for the carriers while they launched fighter sweeps of Kyushu . Guam and Alaska bombarded Oki Dait? for an hour and a half on 9 June , after which they steamed to San Pedro Bay in the Leyte Gulf , arriving on 13 June .

After returning to Okinawa in July , Guam was assigned to Cruiser Task Force 95 , where she served as the flagship , along with her sister Alaska , under the command of Rear Admiral Francis S. Low . On 16 July , Guam and Alaska conducted a sweep into the East China and Yellow Seas to sink Japanese shipping . They had only limited success , however , and returned to the fleet on 23 July . They then joined a major raid , which included three battleships and three escort carriers , into the estuary of the Yangtze River off Shanghai . Again , the operation met with limited success , and they returned to Okinawa by 7 August .

Shortly after returning to Okinawa , Guam became the flagship of the North China Force , again commanded by Rear Admiral Low . The unit was tasked with showing the flag in the region , including the ports of Tsingtao , Port Arthur , and Dalian .

= = = Post war = = =

On 8 September , Guam entered Jinsen , Korea , to assist in the occupation of the country . She left Jinsen on 14 November bound for San Francisco , carrying a group of Army soldiers back to the United States . She arrived in port on 3 December and departed two days later for Bayonne , New Jersey , arriving on the 17th . She remained there until she was decommissioned on 17 February 1947 .

She was then assigned to the Atlantic Reserve Fleet , where she remained until she was stricken from the Navy List on 1 June 1960 . She was sold on 24 May 1961 for \$ 423 @, @ 076 to the Boston Metals Company in Baltimore . She was towed to the shipbreakers on 10 July 1961 . Guam had served only 29 months on active duty . In the course of her career , she received two battle stars for her service during World War II .

= = Awards = =

American Campaign Medal

Asiatic @-@ Pacific Campaign Medal with two battle stars

World War II Victory Medal

Navy Occupation Service Medal with " ASIA " clasp

China Service Medal