



Steel Boat Iron Hearts: A U-boat Crewman's Life Aboard U-505

Hans Goebeler, John Vanzo

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Hans Goebeler is known as the man who “pulled the plug” on U-505 in 1944 to keep his beloved U-boat out of Allied hands. 'Steel Boat, Iron Hearts' is his no-holds-barred account of service aboard a combat U-boat. It is the only full-length memoir of its kind, and Goebeler was aboard for every one of U-505's war patrols.

Using his own experiences, log books, and correspondence with other U-boat crewmen, Goebeler offers rich and very personal details about what life was like in the German Navy under Hitler. Because his first and last posting was to U-505, Goebeler's perspective of the crew, commanders, and war patrols paints a vivid and complete portrait unlike any other to come out of the Kriegsmarine. He witnessed it all: from deadly sabotage efforts that almost sunk the boat to the tragic suicide of the only U-boat commander who took his life during WWII; from the terror and exhilaration of hunting the enemy, to the seedy brothels of France. The vivid, honest, and smooth-flowing prose calls it like it was and pulls no punches.

U-505 was captured by Captain Dan Gallery's Guadalcanal Task Group 22.3 on June 4, 1944. Trapped by this “Hunter-Killer” group, U-505 was depth-charged to the surface, strafed by machine gun fire, and boarded. It was the first ship captured at sea since the War of 1812! Today, hundreds of thousands of visitors tour U-505 each year at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry.

Included a special Introduction by Keith Gill, Curator of U-505, Museum of Science and Industry.

Author Hans Jacob Goebeler served as control room mate aboard U-505. He died in 1999, and author John P. Vanzo is a former defense program analyst. He teaches political science and geography at Bainbridge College in Georgia.

REVIEWS

“...successfully bridges the disparity in between U-505 as merely a modern museum exhibit and a place of validation and comfort for those who served aboard the vessel on its wartime patrols...provides a true account of his experiences aboard the U-505 and dispel rumors about life on the vessel..”

Nautical Research Journal, 03/2010

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