

NATIONAL ARCHIVES CATALOG

Spotlight on Records - Navy Deck Logs

Deck logs from U.S. Navy ships are daily chronological entries documenting the administrative activities of a ship. Deck logs can be useful to genealogists, researchers, and historians as information contained within logs may include details about ship movement, meteorological and operational accounts, sick lists, injuries, honors and even arrests during a particular month. It is no surprise that deck logs are among the most popular U.S. Navy records in the holdings of the National Archives.

As we remember the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, you may be interested to see what the deck logs from December 7, 1941 reported about the events of the day.

Chris Carter, Archivist at the National Archives in College Park, explains the importance of the deck logs from the USS Maryland during the attack on Pearl Harbor:



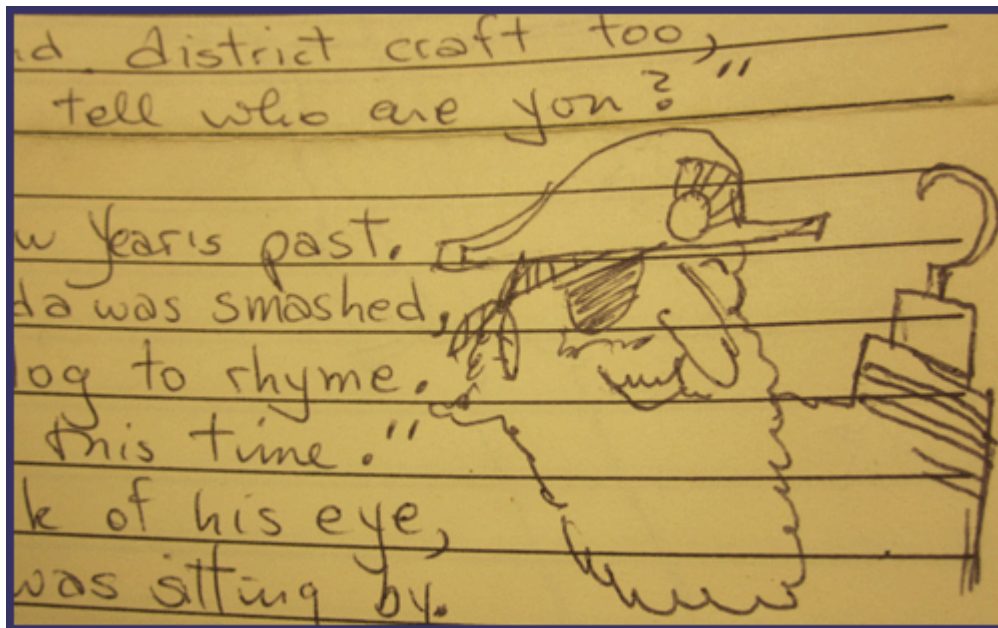
While the December 1941 deck log from the USS Maryland is not yet available in the National Archives Catalog, the deck log from the [USS Monaghan \(DD-354\)](#) includes details about the attack and its engagement with a Japanese submarine on December 7.

UNITED STATES SHIP <u>MONAGHAN</u>		Sunday <u>7</u> December <u>1941</u>	
		(Day)	(Date)
ZONE DESCRIPTION <u>Plus 10</u>		REMARKS	
0 to 4	<p>Moored in nest with DesDiv TWO at Buoy X-14, Pearl Harbor, T.H. Order of ships from starboard to port: AYLWIN, FARRAGUT, DALE, MONAGHAN. In condition of Readiness for getting underway on one hours notice. Boilers No's. 3 and 4 in use. Ships present: various units of U.S. Pacific Fleet plus yard and district craft. Combat for in CALIFORNIA, (SOFA). Made inspections of idle machinery spaces.</p> <p>HART KAIT HART KAIT, Lieut. (jg) U.S. Navy.</p>		
4 to 8	<p>Moored as before. 0730 Mustered crew on stations; no absentees. 0755 Pearl Harbor under aircraft attack by Japanese planes. Went to General Quarters. Making preparations to sortie. Stripped ship for action.</p> <p>HART KAIT HART KAIT, Lieut. (jg) U.S. Navy.</p>		
8 to 12	<p>Moored as before. 0818 Firing on enemy aircraft as opportunity permitted. 0827 Underway from Buoy X-14 in accordance with sortie plan Easy Sail of Comtask-Force One, proceeding on various courses conforming to the channel at various speeds. Captain at the Conn, Navigator at Battle Station #2. 0839 sighted conning tower of enemy submarine bearing 250°T, distant 1200 yards (submarine position 300 yards bearing 180°T from Buoy X-22-3. 1840 Headed for submarine at flank speed to ram. Passed over submarine, dropped two depth charges which exploded at 30 feet depth. Observed one torpedo track passing about 50 yards on starboard beam. 0843 Backed engines emergency, struck dredge moored on west side of channel. Sustained slight damage to starboard plates forward above waterline at frame 38. An inspection of the ship revealed the following damage: sprung outboard bulkhead in compartment A-204-L, tear in plate adjacent to horizontal seam 1/2 inch wide, 3 feet long, moderate leakage; bulkhead shored and leakage stopped, found salt water contamination of oil in fuel oil tank D-411 from an unknown source. 0844 Ran aground in soft bottom on shoal off Beckoning Point. 0846 Backed clear of shoal, proceeding out of channel. 0908 Passed Pearl Harbor entrance buoys abeam, entered International Waters, proceeding on various courses at 12 knots in destroyer off-shore patrol. 1040 Ceased patrolling, proceeding at 25 knots to screen ST LOUIS in company with PHELPS and BLUE.</p> <p>J. W. GILPIN Ensign, U.S. Navy.</p>		

Over the last five years, more than 13,500 deck logs have been digitized by National Archives staff and are available in the National Archives Catalog: "[Logbooks of the U.S. Navy Ships and Stations, 1941-1978](#)." This represents just 2% of the entire series! Deck logs are added to the Catalog as file units, and each file unit represents one month of logs on a US Navy ship. This series contains more than 44,000 physical boxes and is being digitized at a rate of between 2,000-2,500 monthly deck logs each year. National Archives staff are currently digitizing and adding deck logs from the Vietnam War to the Catalog.

Are you interested in Navy deck logs from a particular ship? You can [learn more about deck logs and how to search and request them](#).

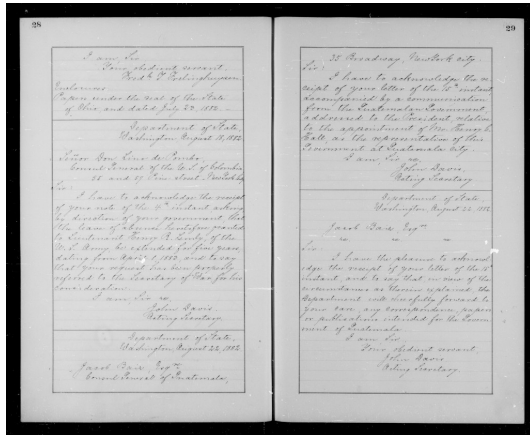
Every record tells a story. Archivist Rachel Sutcliffe [describes some hidden treasures](#) she's discovered within Navy deck logs.



In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, we also invite you to [tag selected records and photographs](#) in the National Archives Catalog related to the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941.

Have you conducted research using Navy Deck logs? Find something interesting? We'd love to hear more! Email us at catalog@nara.gov and tell us what you've discovered.

New in the Catalog



Department of State:

[Notes to Foreign Consuls, 1853-1906](#)

This series consists of communications sent by the Department of State to foreign consular officers in the United States.

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