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BOOK REVIEWS

The formation & operation of the US Army Small Ships in World War II

by Ernest A. Flint

Self-published: Coomba Park, NSW; 2013; 44 pp.; RRP $15 (paperback)

The United States Army Small Ships Section provided amphibious logistic support to General MacArthur’s armies in the South West Pacific Area, especially in New Guinea, but also in the Philippines, in World War II. Some ships also later served in Japan during the occupation. The ships were mostly crewed by Australian civilians.


This A4 booklet is a supplement to both previous histories. It is a compilation of relevant material not available when the earlier histories were published and expands their scope to also embrace the Apprentice School which conducted a one-month course for 15-year-old boys at Walsh Bay, Sydney, prior to their deployment to Finschhafen as crewmen in late 1943; and the Repair and Maintenance Section, which not only supported the Small Ships Section in New Guinea, but also the Australian Army Water Transport, and small ships of the Australian and United States navies. It commences with a brief summary of the history of the Small Ships Section by the author. This introduction is followed by copies of a miscellany of relevant documents which have not been published previously.

This booklet will appeal to historians of the period and descendants of Small Ships Section crewmen.

David Leece

1Available from Captain E.A. Flint, 28 Tallawalla Road, Coomba Park NSW 2428, for $15 (postage paid).