

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic USS Becuna (SS-319)

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Penn's Landing, Delaware Avenue & Spruce Street not for publication

city, town Philadelphia vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Philadelphia code 101

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Cruiser Olympia Association

street & number Penn's Landing, Delaware Avenue & Spruce Street

city, town Philadelphia vicinity of state Pennsylvania

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Philadelphia County Courthouse

street & number City Hall

city, town Philadelphia state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title National Register Nomination Form has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division

city, town Washington state DC 20013-7127

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

USS Becuna (SS-319) was built by the Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut. She was launched on January 30, 1944, and was commissioned on May 27, 1944.

USS Becuna is a fleet-type submarine (built to maintain speeds averaging 17 knots) of the Balao class. Balao class boats were essentially improved versions of the previous Gato class. They were designed to operate at a test depth of 400 feet as opposed to 300 feet for the Gato class.

Specific ship data concerning USS Becuna is:

Length: 308 feet Displacement: 1526 tons surface / 2415 tons submerged

Beam: 27 feet Draft: 15 feet

Speed: 20 knots surface / 9 knots submerged

Design depth: 400 feet Crew: 8 Officers 72 Enlisted

Armament: Ten Torpedo Tubes, 6 forward and 4 aft, with 14 reloads, 24 torpedoes; 1 5"/25 caliber deck gun; various combinations of antiaircraft guns.

USS Becuna was originally a pre-snorkel submarine operating underwater on batteries, and powered by a diesel electric system. In 1951, USS Becuna was converted to a snorkel-equipped Guppy submarine that allowed the boat to operate her diesel engines underwater. During this conversion the boat's exterior guns were removed and the conning tower was enclosed by a new sail casing to reduce underwater resistance.

USS Becuna is in good condition and aside from the addition of the snorkel and exterior changes, retains much of her World War II integrity. USS Becuna is semi-permanently moored in the Delaware River in Philadelphia next to USS Olympia.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics:government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1944-1945 Builder/Architect Electric Boat Company

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

In the conflict against Japan in World War II, the role and importance of the submarine forces of the United States cannot be overestimated. American submarines sank more than 600,000 tons of enemy warships and more than 5,000,000 tons of merchant shipping, thus destroying much of Japan's ocean commerce. This was accomplished by a force that never numbered more than two percent of naval personnel engaged in the war. The American submarine war against Japan created a blockade that denied her the oil, iron ore, food, and other raw materials she needed to continue to fight. By 1945 this submarine war made it all but impossible for Japanese shipping to sail the ocean. Without this commerce and the raw materials it supplied to her war effort, Japan found it impossible to continue the war outside of the homeland.¹

USS Becuna represents the U.S. submarine forces that fought against Japan in World War II for the following reasons:

1. USS Becuna is an example of the standard fleet type Balao class submarine that fought against Japan in World War II.
2. USS Becuna made five war patrols and is credited with sinking 3888 tons of Japanese shipping. USS Becuna received four battle stars for her World War II service.
3. USS Becuna is in good condition and, although altered to be a Guppy submarine, retains much of her World War II integrity.

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Continuation sheet

Item number

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FOOTNOTES

¹Drew Middleton, Submarine--The Ultimate Navy Weapon-Its Past, Present, and Future (Chicago, Illinois: Playboy Press, 1976), pp. 109-12.

Edwin P. Hoyt, Submarine at War--The History of the American Silent Service (New York: Stein and Day, 1983), pp. 297-98.

Richard H. O'Kane, Clear the Bridge (New York: Bzantam Books, 1981), pp. 465-67.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alden, John A. The Fleet Submarine in the U.S. Navy--A Design and Construction History. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1979.

Blair, Clay, Jr. Silent Victory--The U.S. Submarine War Against Japan. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1975.

Hoyt, Edwin P. Submarine at War--The History of the American Silent Service. New York: Stein and Day, 1983.

Middleton, Drew. Submarine--The Ultimate Naval Weapon--Its Past, Present, and Future. Chicago, Illinois: Playboy Press, 1976.

O'Kane, Richard. Clear the Bridge. New York: Bantam Books, 1981.

Roscoe, Theodore. United States Submarine Operations in World War II. Annapolis, Maryland: United States Naval Institute, 1965.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property N/A

Quadrangle name Philadelphia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM Referencea

A

1	8	4	8	17	8	16	10	4	14	2	11	2	16	10
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

N/A

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Harry A. Butowsky

organization National Park Service

date May 1985

street & number Division of History

telephone (202) 343-8168

city or town Washington

state DC 20013-7127

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration