

HOLY APOSTLES CHURCH – PIMLICO

PART OF OUR HISTORY

When Mass is said you hear the gentle dong of the Sanctuary bell. One of the alter servers has pushed the bell push on the alter steps and this rings the bell in the tower



The bell sits peacefully in the bell tower until called upon to do its job. This bell has not always known this peace. Cast in Brass, 33cm Diameter, and 33 cm high, in the Vickers Armstrong shipyard in Barrow in Furness in 1943, it was installed in a new T Class Submarine “HMS Thorough” (P324) the only Ship/Boat in the Royal Navy with this name

The boat was laid down on the 26th October 1942, Launched on the 30th October 1943, and commissioned into the Navy on 1st March 1944

In late 1944 the boat was sent to the Royal Naval base at Trincomalee in Ceylon (Now known as Sri Lanka) to become part of the South China Sea Submarine flotilla in the war with Japan.

Commanded by Lt Cdr Jack Gethin Hopkins RN (Nov 1943-Feb 1945) and later by Lt Arthur George Chandler RNR, who was awarded DSC on 7th Aug 1945, (Feb to Oct 1945) the boat took part in many patrols with many notable actions, she sank 27 Japanese vessels, 7 coasters plus barges, gunboats, and trawlers

The action report for 3rd June 1945 reads – 1614 sighted two Japanese coasters south of Pulo Peloh, Surfaced 1627, 8000 yards from targets and opened fire with 4” guns, both ship turned toward beach,, large coaster open fire on us with 6 pound gun, shots fell short, Both coasters hit the beach and crews abandoned ships & fled into Jungle. Both vessels destroyed by gun fire

The action report for 5th June 1945 reads – At 1230 spotted a loaded north bound Japanese sea-truck. Fire was opened from deck gun from 4000 yards, crew seen to abandon ship & swim to Gadong Islands, sea truck sank, 40 rounds fired – 1310 investigated Large Junk, came along side and 7 Chinese crew abandoned ship, persuaded crew to return, inspected cargo, and allowed vessel to proceed on its way

After the war the boat’s most notable event was that she was the first submarine to circumnavigate the globe

The bell was supplied to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, presumably by Holy Apostles in 1964, who converted it to electrical operation and installed it into our bell tower, i.e. 7 years after the church was completed

SO THE BIG QUESTION IS HOW DID THE BELL GET FROM THE SUBMARINE TO THE HOLY APOSTLES – IF ANY ONE HAS THIS INFORMATION PLEASE LET US



HMS THOROUGH
276.5 ft long 25.5 ft beam – two 2,500 hp Diesels & two
1,450 hp Electric motors - 1560 tons submerged

