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Steel Boat, Iron Hearts

A-U-boat Crewman's Life Aboard U-505

by Hans Goebeler with John Vanzo

Specifications

ISBN 1-932714-07-3

October 2004. Revised edition.

288 pages, 22 photos, three maps,
index. HC, d.j., 6 x 9

Price: \$32.95

Introduction by Keith Gill, Curator, *U-505*, Chicago Museum of Science and Industry

Foreword by Alex-Olaf Loewe,
U-505's first commander

Promotional Information

- Bound galleys available on request
- Author Interview with John Vanzo
 - Excerpt for web use or printing
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Distribution

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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 his service aboard a combat U-boat. It is the only full-length memoir of its kind, and Goebeler was aboard for every *U-505* war patrol. *Steel Boat, Iron Hearts* was privately published in paper in 1999. This is the first edition available to the book trade.

Using his own experiences, log books, and correspondence with other U-boat crewmen, Goebeler offers rich and 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 complete portrait unlike any other to come out of the Kriegsmarine. He witnessed it all: from the terror and exhilaration of hunting the enemy, to the seedy brothels of France; through the deadly sabotage efforts that almost sank the boat, to the tragic suicide while on patrol of the only U-boat commander who took his life during WWII. *Steel Boat, Iron Hearts* is a vividly written and brutally honest book. Goebeler 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.

About the Authors: *Hans Jacob Goebeler* served as control room mate aboard *U-505*. He moved to the USA after the war and organized reunions between former *U-505* crewmen and Guadalcanal Task Force members. Hans died in 1999. Former defense program analyst *John P. Vanzo* teaches political science and geography at Bainbridge College in Georgia.