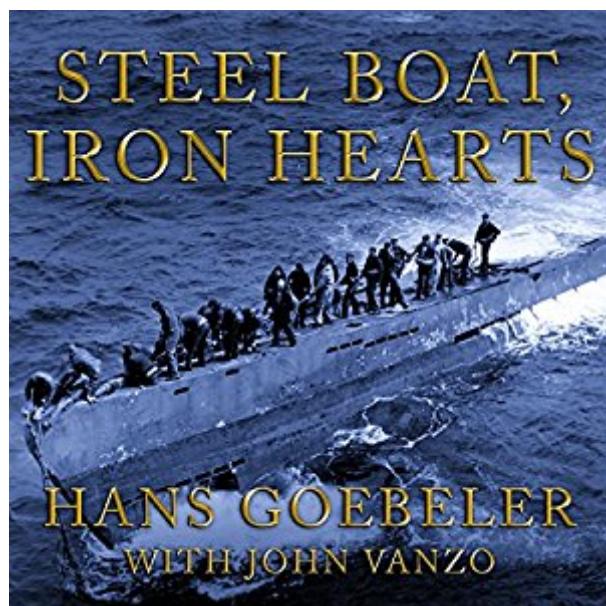


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Steel Boat Iron Hearts: A U-boat Crewman's Life Aboard U-505



Synopsis

Using his own experiences, log books, and correspondence with other U-boat crewmen, Hans Goebeler offers rich and personal details about what life was like in the German Navy under Hitler. Since his first and last posting was to U-505, Goebeler's perspective of the crew, commanders, and war patrols paints a vivid and complete portrait unlike any other to come out of the Kriegsmarine. He witnessed it all, from deadly sabotage efforts that almost sunk the boat to the tragic suicide of the only U-boat commander who took his life during World War II. The vivid, honest, and smooth-flowing prose 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. This edition includes a special foreword by Keith Gill, curator of U-505 at the Museum of Science and Industry.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After touring the U-505 at the Chicago Museum of Science and Technology, I was mesmerized and hungry to know more. Learning a book had been written by one of its captured crew members, I was eager to read it, but never dreamed it would be this well written and comprehensive! It's not distressingly technical, but is a fascinating account of everything this author could recall. I'm sad that he's gone now... I have more questions for him about his life after the war's end. In my opinion,

this is a must read for anyone who loves history that is shared well.

A detailed look at the life of a U-boat crewman. What I found most interesting about this book is Goebeler's patriotism shines through even after all these years. I didn't get the feeling he was a Nazi, but rather a member of the German military, and his feelings of comradeship and desire to win the war came from that. Even at the time he wrote the book, you can tell he still wasn't really too happy with being constantly bombed and hunted by the Allies, and his anger at a German officer who ended up helping the Allies is still palpable. This is probably not unlike any soldier fighting for any country at any time, and it's a unique perspective. Yes, these fellows were pretty much like our soldiers and sailors-- they liked fighting, drinking, and whoring, and not necessarily in that order. This book really succeeds in giving the reader an accurate idea of what it was like to serve aboard a U-boat, the challenges they faced, the hardships they went through. I don't know if there is any way to describe the feeling of hiding under water while people are dropping drums of explosives on you, though.

I give this book a 5/5 rating! I give this book the same High Praise that I give such great World War II works as Das Boot..... much like the aforementioned book this one gives us a glimpse into the Dismal, miserable Kama claustrophobic lifestyle aboard a German U-boat. However, whereas Das Boot focused exclusively on a fictionalized history based upon the Recollections of the author this book is the real deal! Hans Goebler has done a phenomenal job of recounting his personal memories and emotions into this work! He gives us a really great back story into his own personal history, he gives us a glimpse of what life was like both on and off the U-boat during the time when they were the Raiders of the North Atlantic, and then immediately Transitions and gives us a bleak picture of life in war-torn Europe and all the misfortunes the U-505 encountered during those last critical years of its career. From success and Glory to failure and fame..... This book is one of the best works out there on the U-505, and in my opinion....Rivals Das Boot in terms of describing what the life and politics of being a member of the German Navy were truly like during WW2. Highly recommended this book!!!

I live near Chicago, and my dad used to take my family to the Museum of Science and Industry often. I am well familiar with the U-505 and have read just about everything I could get my hands on concerning this boat. This is a paean to the almost insanely brave men who served their respective countries- no, I will not praise Nazis, here, just the men who did their duty to protect and defend.

Ours no less than theirs- I wonder if I could have found the nerve to climb down into a sinking submarine, almost certainly booby-trapped, to capture it and the secrets it held. The author felt the same way about the boarding party that saved his ship, despite the horror he felt at the time. This is a personal story by a crewman who joined what may have been the luckiest boat in the Kriegsmarine before its first combat patrol. His memoir about the appalling conditions he and his mates lived under, the differences between subsequent Captains, describes the fierce pride that he and his crew exhibited... This is a gripping read- I could not put it down. It made the U-505 story come alive in a way that I had never imagined.

This book tells the story of WWII submarine warfare from the German viewpoint, by a crewman on a U-boat. I was fascinated by many things in it. The account of day-to-day life aboard a cramped, crowded submarine, in constant danger, was mesmerizing. Even more interesting, at least to me, was learning that young Germans were motivated by patriotism, peer pressure, and a sense of duty to fight the war. They were as chivalrous as circumstances allowed, and they didn't hold grudges against their Allied enemies. They didn't question their commanders, they never believed the war was going badly, and they barely heard rumors of atrocities committed by their leaders. We have a tendency to demonize the Germans for their blind obedience to Hitler, but in many ways, these sailors sounded a lot like their American counterparts. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn what life was like for German U-boat sailors.

I read the Kindle version. This book and "Teddy Suhren Ace of Aces" are the best two first hand accounts of U-boats that I have found. If you really want a great experience of the capture of U-505, watch the actual footage on YouTube as you read about it in the book.

Not a new book, but a refreshing perspective on the war from the German side. Not every sailor/soldier was a Nazi. There was pride of country and they fought for many of the same reasons the Allies fought. The U-Boat crews suffered losses greater than any other service. The hardships were many and the bold u-boat crews that survived the war were few. I visited U-505 at the Field Museum in Chicago 20 years ago and was impressed with the small size. I never knew much about its role in the war until I read this book. The author, a crew member, moved to the US and became a spokesperson for explaining his side of the story. The book kept my attention and through it I gained a new perspective on the other side of the story. This was a good read, and I would recommend you give it a look.

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