

# “Her Name Was Fidelity” ( HMS)

**Disguised Merchant Ship (SSV = Special Service Vessel)**

**Torpedoed in ONS 154 on December 30, 1942**



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**Disguised Merchant Ship (SSV = Special Service Vessel)**

**The ship was originally called the *Le Rhin* and was a British made, but French owned tramp steamer, used in the Mediterranean, displacing 2456 tons.**

Built in 1920, *Le Rhin* was an armed merchantman working for the French Colonial Intelligence Service. Costa took the ship and crew to Gibraltar in 1940 to join the Allies She was taken over by the British in June 1940. It was only after her hand over to the Royal Navy that she was armed and used as a 'Q-Ship', although in WWII they were termed as 'Special Service Vessels'. 1941/09: Renamed *Fidelity*,

**Our intention is not to make a feature on the Fidelity, there are many good web sites with excellent accounts and reports and several books etc. Most can be found easily in a basic internet search.**

### **HMS Fidelity**

HMS Fidelity was a Royal Navy ‘Q’ ship, originally a French vessel named "Le Rhin", an armed merchant vessel. She was taken over by The Royal Navy in June 1940, and converted to a Special Service Vessel (SSV). She was sunk on January 1st 1943 ,with the lost of 325 lives, whilst in Convoy ONS-154 disguised as a Merchant Navy ship in Atlantic off Azores.

**Our interest in the Fidelity is to both tribute and remember, those who served on this Ship. We wish only to guide interested parties to the works of others that have recorded her demise etc.**

## **HMS Fidelity, WRNS Officer.**

“It was only after her hand over to the Royal Navy that she was armed and used as a 'Q-Ship', although in WWII they were termed as 'Special Service Vessels'. It is was not the norm to have female personnel onboard. As for the WRNS officer, her real name Madeleine Bayard, also known as Madeleine Barclay, had travelled back to Europe and was aboard *Le Rhin* when it sailed to England. Part of the deal for the hand-over of the ship and its cargo, was that along with the rest of the crew who were to be enrolled in the RN, Bayard would become a WRNS officer, serving on board *Fidelity*.

First Officer Madeline Barclay (WRNS) [Read her story](#)

- Thomas Henry Bramley [Read his story](#)
- John Victor Goodall [Read his story](#)
- Reginald Hemming Hill Royal Marines [Read his story](#)
- Albert George Mash [Read his story](#)
- Cpl Reginald Herbert Metcalf Royal Marines [Read his story](#)
- George Ernest Moule [Read his story](#)
- Yeoman of Signals Albert Edmund Seekins [Read his story](#)
- Petty Officer Charles A L Whitcher [Read his story](#)
- Able Seaman John Thomas Workman. [Read his story](#)

[The Wartime Memories Project - HMS Fidelity](#)

<http://www.gordonmumford.com/ons154-3.htm>

[uboat.net - Allied Ships hit by U-boats - HMS Fidelity \(D 57 ...](#)

**We sincerely hope that the above information will be seen as a guide only to an interesting piece of Maritime History and that the above links will assist all interested parties in finding the full story of the ship, known as the second most secret ship of the war “Her Name Was Fidelity”.**

**All credit is due to the above web sites.**

**But please join us in Tribute and remembrance.**