

Howard Thomas Reynolds, USN

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Born in Glen Cove, SF1c Howard Thomas Reynolds was the son of Joseph H. Reynolds who resided at 15 Clement Street in Glen Cove. He attended St Patrick's School and after graduating was a member of the Glen Cove Fire Department.

Reynolds enlisted in the Navy the day after the attack at Pearl Harbor. After completing his training, he was stationed aboard the *USS Warrington* (DD-383) and served on that vessel through 31 months of duty in the Pacific combat theater.

"He took part in all major campaigns in that theatre," wrote the editor of the *Glen Cove Record-Advance*, "and his Asiatic Service ribbon was covered with battle stars". The *Warrington* served during the early part of the war as part of the Southeast Pacific Force, escorting troop and supply ships and patrolling for enemy submarines as far south as Peru. In early June, 1943, she was re-assigned to the Pacific Fleet, and served on escort duty in the waters around Australia, Samoa, New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, and the New Hebrides Islands. She was then attached to the Seventh Fleet and was sent to New Guinea to serve as escort for LSTs engaged in amphibious operations in the islands in the area.

In mid-June, 1944, the *Warrington* was ordered back to the United States for a much-needed 90-day overhaul at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. However when *Warrington* reached New York on July 15th, her outgoing commanding officer, CDR. Robert A. Dawes Jr., was informed that *Warrington* would only receive a short 10-day overhaul instead. Howard Reynolds managed to get back to Glen Cove on leave for a short time during *Warrington's* overhaul, after which *Warrington* headed south to Norfolk, Virginia for further alterations to the ship. Reynolds was scheduled to be rotated stateside. On 10 September, the *Warrington* left Norfolk, under the command of CDR. Samuel F. Quarles, with a newly commissioned transport ship, the *Hy-*



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The USS Warrington

ades (AF-28). The *Warrington* was to provide an anti-submarine escort to *Hyades* as far as Trinidad, whereupon the *Warrington* was to return to Norfolk.

Two days out of Norfolk, 450 miles east of Florida, the two ships began to encounter heavy weather. On the afternoon of September 12th, *Warrington* received word that she was steaming directly into a Category 4 hurricane, later termed the "Great Atlantic Hurricane" by the U.S. Weather Bureau. Later that evening, the storm forced the destroyer to heave to while the much larger *Hyades* continued on her way alone. Keeping wind and sea on her port bow, *Warrington* rode relatively well through most of the night. Wind and seas, however, continued

to build during the early morning hours of the 13th, with winds reaching 140 mph and waves approaching 70 ft. *Warrington* began to lose headway and, as a result, started to ship water through the vents to her engineering spaces. First Class Petty Officer Reynolds was in charge of the forward damage control party, and was desperately trying to start the emergency pumps to pump out the engineering spaces that were rapidly becoming flooded.

The water rushing into her vents caused a loss of electrical power which set off a chain reaction. Her main engines lost power, and her steering engine and mechanism went out. She wallowed there in the trough of the swells—continuing to ship water. She regained headway briefly and turned upwind,

while her radiomen desperately, but fruitlessly, tried to raise *Hyades*. Finally, she resorted to a plain-language distress call to any ship or shore station, and was able to raise the New York Naval radio operator. By noon on the 13th, it was apparent that *Warrington's* crewmen could not win the struggle to save their ship, and the order went out to prepare to abandon ship. By 1250, her exhausted crew had left the listing *Warrington*, and she went down almost immediately. Most of the crew was left to tread water without any lifejackets, and some had made it to the few rubber rafts or floater nets that they were able to deploy before they abandoned ship. A prolonged three-day search by



The USS Warrington (DD-383) as it appeared in 1944.

Hyades, *Frost* (DE-144), *Huse* (DE-145), *Inch* (DE-146), *Snowden* (DE-246), *Swasey* (DE-248), *Woodson* (DE-359), *Johnnie Hutchins* (DE-360), *ATR-9*, and *ATR-62* rescued only 68 sailors of the destroyer's compliment of 317 crewmembers. Although he was an excellent swimmer, SF1c Howard T. Reynolds was one of the 249 sailors who died in the Warrington sinking.

In 1954, the City of Glen Cove named Reynolds Road in his honor.

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