



USS *Murzim*

AK-95

The second brightest star in the constellation Canis Major.

Builder: California Shipbuilding Corp., Wilmington, California

Length: 441' 6"

Beam: 56' 11"

Draft: 28' 4"

Displacement: 14,350 tons

Top speed: 12.5 knots

Complement: 207

Armament: 1 x 3"; 2 x 40mm

History:

MURZIM (AK-95) was laid down as BRIGHAM YOUNG under Maritime Commission contract by California Shipbuilding Co., Wilmington, Calif., 10 July 1942; launched 17 August 1942; sponsored by Mrs. Albert E. Bowen; renamed MURZIM 17 March 1943; acquired by the Navy under bareboat charter from the Maritime Commission 8 April 1943; converted for use as a naval cargo ship by Los Angeles Shipbuilding & Drydock Corp., Los Angeles, Calif.; and commissioned at Los Angeles 14 May 1943, Lt. J. E. King, USCGR, in command.

For almost 2 months MURZIM operated along the west coast under the 11th Naval District; thence, after loading general cargo, she departed San Francisco 8 July and arrived Noumea, New Caledonia, 5 August. Assigned to Service Squadron, South Pacific Force, she began cargo shuttle runs among American

bases in the South Pacific. During the next year, she delivered supplies from ports in Australia, New Zealand, and New Caledonia to the New Hebrides, the Fijis, and the Solomons. She carried out several voyages between Noumea and Guadalcanal, and in the spring of 1944 she extended her runs northward along the Solomon chain to Bougainville, New Georgia, Green Island, and the Russells. In mid-June she sailed from the Solomons via New Guinea to the Admiralties where she discharged cargo at Manus. And after steaming to Australia for a cargo of ammunition, she returned to New Guinea 24 August. For almost 2 months MURZIM supplied anti-aircraft ammunition to ships at Hollandia preparing for the invasion of the Philippines. After filling her holds with ammunition from ammunition ship PYRO (AE-1), she sailed in convoy for the Philippines 24 October. Arriving Leyte Gulf 29 October, she began duty as an ammo station ship.

During the next 3 months she supplied scores of ships from cruisers to LSTs with a variety of ammunition which ranged from 6-inch to 20mm. Despite numerous air alerts, her crew carried out the dangerous business of transferring ammunition to ships alongside. During an enemy air attack 27 November, her 20mm guns splashed a [Japanese] plane attacking the cargo ship from starboard. Between 27 January 1945 and 4 February, MURZIM steamed in convoy to Manus where she replenished her holds with ammunition. Thence, after joining a convoy at Hollandia, she returned to Leyte 22 March and resumed ammo station duty in Leyte Gulf. From 4 May to 1 June she shuttled cargo to Morotai, Hollandia, and Manus and made a replenishment run to Brisbane, Australia. During the closing weeks of the war against Japan, she delivered cargo to Manus and cruised to the Philippines with additional supplies of ammunition.

Following the Japanese surrender, MURZIM was authorized for use in atomic tests in the Marshalls, and was ordered to transfer to joint TF 1, 25 February 1946. However, she was assigned to the 14th Naval District for inactivation 11 March and she decommissioned at Pearl Harbor 7 June.

She remained at Pearl Harbor until March 1947 when she was towed to San Francisco. Her name was struck from the Navy list 23 June. MURZIM was transferred to the Maritime Commission 5 August 1947, and entered the National Defense Reserve Fleet at Suisun Bay where she remains berthed into 1969.

MURZIM received one battle star for World War II service.



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Sources:

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, (1969) Vol. 4, p. 459.
