



# Rescue Of The Helena Survivors In World War Ii: A Tale of Incredible Courage

*Robert J. Richey*

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This book is written about a Light Cruiser that was heavily involved in the Solomon's in the far Pacific. It seemed that she was indestructable and possessed of a charmed life. Time after time when trouble struck and it seemed that disaster lurked in the wings the angel of death passed over her. But those who repeatedly tempt fate are destined to reap a bitter harvest.

It happened after the Enemy had been driven off the Island of Guadalcanal and had retired to the Island of New Georgia to make a desperate stand. But the United States Military Forces were not to be denied the Fruits of Final Victory.

Fierce nocturnal Fights erupted at Night in the Sea around the Island of New Georgia. And it was on one of these terrible nights in a God Forsaken stretch of Water the Natives called Kula Gulf that the Helena's charmed life came to an end.

The first Torpedo tore off her bow; two more torpedoes broke her hull in two pieces and put her on the bottom.

About 176 men perished in the sinking. Another 760 were cast into the sea. Two destroyer picked up about 500 of them and fled the scene to be out of reach of the Japanese dive bombers before dawn to light up the eastern sky.

This book is about the rescue of the remaining crew members who remained in the dark murky waters of Kula Gulf. These unfortunate men had no assurance that they would ever be rescued. Many of them spent what seemed to be endless hours tortured by thirst; plagued by the pain of burns and other injuries that exposed raw flesh to the Salt Water. It was a hellish situation if there ever was one. From time to time another and another gave up the fight to survive and sank below the sea to rise no more.

Here they were cast into the dark waters right at the enemies doorstep. But their salvation was waiting in the wings as the valor and devotion to their fellow comrades decided the issue. Like the Cavalry of Old charging across the prairie with the Bugles Shrill notes blowing the Charge the remaining destroyers at Guadalcanal came to their rescue.

This in the final analysis is the incredible Story of that Valiant Rescue.

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