

“Van Kinsbergen” History

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- January 5 1939 Launch of Hr. Ms. Van Kinsbergen.
- August 24 1939 Commissioning of Hr Ms Van Kinsbergen. On the same date, her predecessor Hr. Ms. Gelderland was definitely decommissioned and her commander, Commander Hoeke, assumed command of the Van Kinsbergen. The ship was named after the 18th century admiral Jan Hendrik Van Kinsbergen.
- August 26 1939 Van Kinsbergen leaves Den Helder to meet the Dutch submarine O 13, which was on her way to Holland from the West Indies.
- August 28 1939 The ships meet in the English Channel.
- August 29 1939 Arrival in Den Helder.
- October 2 1939 Left Den Helder for West Indies with submarines O 20 and O 14 to train new gunners and to relieve sloop Johan Maurits van Nassau in the West Indies. Van Kinsbergen leaving Den Helder on October 2nd, 1939.
- October 31 1939 Arrival in Curaçao.
- November 1 1939 In the evening, the Van Kinsbergen left port as a British destroyer entered territorial waters, which was strictly forbidden by the neutrality proclamation of September 1939. The destroyer left shortly after.
- February 29 1940 An incident similar to the one on November 1st occurred as a British cruiser steamed into territorial waters. This mistake was also resolved without problems.
- March 5 1940 Van Kinsbergen visits the island Bonaire until the 11th.
- March 17 1940 The Dutch passengership Van Rensselaer delivers a new group of men, who are to be trained aboard Van Kinsbergen.
- May 10 1940 War with Germany started early this morning. Boarding parties of the Van Kinsbergen successfully captured 7 German ships at Curaçao: ss. Este (7915 gt), ss Vancouver (8269 gt), ms Henry Horn (3164 gt), ms Patricia (3979 gt), ms Frisia (561 gt), ms Karibia (428 gt) and ss Alemania (1380 gt).
- May 19 1940 The ship comes under command of C-in-C West Indies and America, based in Bermuda.
- May 24 1940 The ship, enroute to Bermuda, is recalled to Curaçao.

- May 31 1940 Van Kinsbergen enters drydock in Curaçao for some repairs and remains there until June 2.
- June 2 1940 Van Kinsbergen receives a depthcharge installation, copied from HMS Caradoc. She is back in service on the 6th.
- June 10 1940 Van Kinsbergen starts a patrol off Venezuela, where several Italian tankers were located. It was feared the Italians might try to block the entrance to lake of Maracaibo, where important oilfields are situated. Fortunately, nothing happened and the ship returned to Curaçao on the 13th.
- July 5 1940 The ship is rerouted to Aruba, where the French are busy embarking their troops (France had surrendered in late June), and the local government feared they might try to set the fueldepots on fire. The captain of the French armed merchant cruiser Esterel assured the Dutch nothing was to fear from them, and the troops left Aruba quietly.
- July 25 1940 Van Kinsbergen leaves Trinidad to patrol the waters of Guyana and to visit Suriname. She enters Paramaribo on the 30th.
- August 20 1940 Rendez vous with the American heavy cruiser USS Tuscaloosa (CA-37) for demonstration of the advanced triaxial 40 mm Bofors. She fires at targets towed by a floatplane of the heavy cruiser. This demonstration and other good experiences with the 40 mm Bofors eventually lead to the introduction of this weapon in the US Navy, to become the most effective mid-range AA-weapon during the war!
- October 6 1940 Van Kinsbergen visits Bermuda until the 13th.
- October 29 1940 She receives a signal reporting the Hapag-steamer Helgoland (2947 gt) had left Puerto Colombia a day earlier. She patrols the entrance of the Panamanacanal until the next day, and then heads for the Windward Passage. Nothing was found of the Helgoland, and despite the search, she would eventually make it to Germany.
- November 3 1930 Arrival in Kingston, Jamaica for refueling. She receives order to search for the Vichy-French steamer Charles L.D. (5267 gt) shortly after with the cruiser HMS Diomedé. The ships patrol the waters of Martinique until the 11th, but found nothing.
- December 1 1940 Van Kinsbergen took part in the search for the German Hapag-steamers Idarwald (5033 gt, built 1922) and Rhein (6049 gt, built 1926) on their way to their homeland. The Van Kinsbergen intercepts the Rhein in the early morning of the 11th, but the crew of the German vessel manages to set it on fire. The burnt-out wreck was later sunk by HMS Caradoc. The crew was picked up by the Van Kinsbergen.
- December 14 1940 Arrival in Curaçao for a quick overhaul.

January 30 1941 Arrival in Trinidad.

February 1941 Van Kinsbergen takes part in Operation "Bacon", the capture of two Danish tankers, the Scandia (8571 gt) and Christian Holm (9919 gt). The captains of these ships have already agreed surrender their vessels before the operation started, but they feared retaliation by the Germans against their relatives in occupied Denmark. Two Canadian armed yachts, HMCS Husky and Vison are also in on this, and they are the ones which capture the tankers on February 5 1941. The ships were escorted to Port of Spain on Trinidad.

late April 1941 Van Kinsbergen enters drydock in Curaçao for some condensor-repairs.

May 7 1941 The ship arrives in Bermuda, where she had her boilers cleaned until the 20th.

May 21 1941 Departure from Bermuda.

May 23 1941 Van Kinsbergen arrives in the patrolarea east of the French Antilles to relieve HMS Caradoc.

May 26 1941 Without much trouble the Vichy French steamer ss. Winnipeg (8379 gt, built 1929, enroute from Casablanca to Guadeloupe) is captured in the evening with about 750 passengers on board. The ship is taken to Port of Spain and turned over to the local authorities on the 27th. This steamer of the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique later came under control of the Canadian Pacific Line and sank in the northern Atlantic in 1942. The seizure of Vichy-French vessels is the result of an order issued on May 17 to intercept and capture all Vichy-French merchants.

May 28 1941 Departure from Trinidad to resume her patrol. She receives a signal the following day with the message that the French steamer Arica under escort of the armed merchant cruiser Barfleur would leave on the 30th for Dakar. The order was to track the ships and capture the Arica after the AMC had left her.

June 1 1941 The Vichy-French steamer Arica (5390 gross tons, built 1934) of the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique is captured in the Atlantic, although this time the French crew was far less cooperative. An attempt to sabotage the ship was made, although without succes. This ship too was turned over to British naval officials in Port of Spain on June 4. She was later torpedoed off Trinidad in 1942. Van Kinsbergen resumes her patrolactivity east of Martinique in the next few weeks.

June 24 1941 While still patrolling east of Martinique, Van Kinsbergen is ordered to depart for the UK, after a short visit to Paramaribo from June 27 to 29.

July 3 1941 Arrival in Curaçao.

July 7 1941 Van Kinsbergen leaves Curaçao for Liverpool.

July 11 1941	Arrival in Bermuda.
July 15 1941	The journey to the UK begins as the ship leaves the harbor. She arrives in Liverpool on July 25 after an uneventful trip.
August 4 1941	Van Kinsbergen enters drydock for some repairs and minor modifications. During the overhaul, the crew is virtually completely replaced by other personnel. She leaves drydock on the 23rd and a period of training from Greenock follows.
August 18 1941	Commander Hoeke is relieved by Commander C. Hellingman as captain.
September 6 1941	The Van Kinsbergen has completed her refit and is ready to leave for the West Indies with a detachment of 60 soldiers from the Prinses Irene-Brigade.
September 14 1941	Arrival in Bermuda.
September 30 1941	Van Kinsbergen arrives in Paramaribo, Suriname, where the detachment disembark. She remains here until October 8.
November 15 1941	Commander Hellingman is promoted to Captain.
January 4 1942	The Van Kinsbergen is now under command of Commander Caribbean Patrol Force, with as homeport San Juan. Her main task was escorting convoys from Trinidad, Curaçao and Aruba to ports in Venezuela and Florida, USA.
February 17 1942	Van Kinsbergen arrives in Curaçao after the U-boat operation "Neuland" had started the day before. Her services as convoy escort were very much needed.
March 23 1942	One of the 75 mm-guns is removed for use as coastal artillery on Aruba.
March 24 1942	Van Kinsbergen goes into overhaul, and receives a new DC-installation with a total of 18 depthcharges.
Mid April 1942	The sloop takes part in a hunt for U-130, which had bombarded oil installations in the night of April 18 and 19.
April 26 1942	Van Kinsbergen assists the Dutch laketanker Rebecca (3176 gross tons, built 1938), which had been beached in the Anuraybay near the island Paraquana. She managed to bring the tanker afloat.
June 25 1942	Van Kinsbergen anchors off Islas los Roques, a group of coral islands off Caracas, where the British and US Navy suspect a U-boatresupplybase. A thorough search has no result. Parties search other islands in the following days, also without result.
August 18 1942	Van Kinsbergen leaves Curaçao for Norfolk for an overhaul.

August 30 1942 Arrival in Norfolk, USA. The ship remains here until October 28 1942, where she is modified dramatically. She receives among other things a type 271 radar, a type 128C asdic and racks for 52 depthcharges. In addition, 8 DC-mortars are installed.

October 28 1942 Van Kinsbergen leaves Norfolk escorting the new USN tanker USS Monongahela (AO-42).

November 4 1942 Van Kinsbergen arrives in Willemstad, Curaçao.

November 5 1942 The German submarine U-129 sinks the American tanker Meton (7027 tons) and the Norwegian tanker Astrell (7595 tons) from convoy TAG-18 about 10 miles west of Curaçao. Van Kinsbergen leaves port to assist in the rescue of the surviving tankercrews and to hunt for the U-boat. On arrival, she sinks the Astrell, broken in two, with her guns because the ship was beyond salvage anyway. The sloop continued her search until the evening. The Dutch MTB TM-23 saves a total of 69 men from both tankers (49 of Meton, 20 of Astrell).

November 12 1942 Van Kinsbergen rescues survivors of the American sloop USS Erie (PG-50), which was torpedoed by U-163 while escorting convoy TAG 20. Van Kinsbergen was at that time also part of the escort.

January 1943 Van Kinsbergen takes part in two U-boat hunts without result.

April 23 1943 Captain Hellingman is relieved by Commander J.J.L. Willinge as captain.

August 19 1943 Commander Willinge is relieved as captain by Commander J.A. Gauw. He would remain in command until September 20 1945.

April 16 1944 Departure for Norfolk, USA for repairs and maintenance.

May 9 1944 Van Kinsbergen leaves Norfolk after a period of modifications.

June 17 1944 Van Kinsbergen escorts the large U.S. trooptransport George Washington (23.788 gt) from Trinidad to Barbados. The last leg was to Miami, where both ships arrive on the 22nd.

July 23 1944 Departure for New York, where the ship was serviced and the gunners could practice. After that, she was part of a Hunter-Killer-Group in the Western Atlantic where she got the nickname "Flying Dutchman".

Late July / Early
August 1944 During a refit, Van Kinsbergen receives a TBS-system (talk-between-ships).

September 1944 Back in New York at the Tompkinsville Naval Yard on Staten Island for a refit, to repair the asdic and to install a SF-type radar. The overhaul was completed on the 20th.

October 1944 Van Kinsbergen at sea (during trials after refit?).

December 30 1944	Departure for Willemstad, Curaçao, where she only remained for a short period, because on January 10 1945 she left for England where she arrived on January 23.
January 26 1945.	She steamed to Shadwell New Bassin in London, where she was laid up until August 29.
August 31 1945	Van Kinsbergen moored in a Dutch port after six years. The place was the Merwedehaven in Rotterdam, where she stayed at the RDM dockyard for repairs.
October 24 1945	Departure for Netherlands East Indies for restoring the peace again in the colony. She would stay there for a year.
August 1946	Fire support for own troops in the Semarang area.
February 12 1952	Start of a world cruise to New Guinea, during which also Australia was visited.
February 4 1954	Return in Holland, where she remained until the decision to refit her as an accommodation ship.
November 1 1955	Conversion to accommodation ship completed.
May 29 1959	Decommissioning after almost 16 years of loyal service. She then served as a practiceobject at the Technical Education school in Amsterdam.
May 19 1974	Sold for scrap to the firm Van Heyghen in Gent, Belgium for 515.500 guildens.

Based on information provided by Willem Cool.