

Seaworthy Vet 'Tied Up' Here

A distinguished, highly decorated battle veteran with a distinctive American name is visiting Anchorage this week, but she won't be

feted at any official banquets. The visitor is the USS Cocopa, a 19-year-old fleet tug that has seen action in

three wars and proudly displays 15 battle ribbons. After such service, most Navy ships are laid to rest in a mothball fleet, but not so

the Cocopa, who enjoys her "retirement" traveling through the Pacific, to the Far East and Alaska, helping victims of natural disasters.

And although long-distance towing is the primary mission for this 205-foot ship, she also tows targets for fleet gunnery exercises and performs salvage operations.

She is named after an Indian tribe, as are all fleet tugs.

"We carry a full crew of experienced divers and beaching gear," says Ensign Jim Abbott, the ship's diving officer. "This, in addition to our 6,000 gallon-per-minute salvage pumps, allows us to aid just about any distressed ship."

Also aiding in rescue operations is the more than 3,000 horsepower developed by the ship's four diesel-electric engines. Lt. Cmdr. R. A. Crooks, commander of the ship, says, "We can pull the largest vessels easily, although people often confuse us with the much smaller harbor tugs."

The Cocopa opened her "hatches" to the public Wednesday, but few Alaskans were able to visit during the open house hours set from 1 to 5 p.m. Someone forgot to mention the local tides, which can drop as much as 30 feet in dock areas.

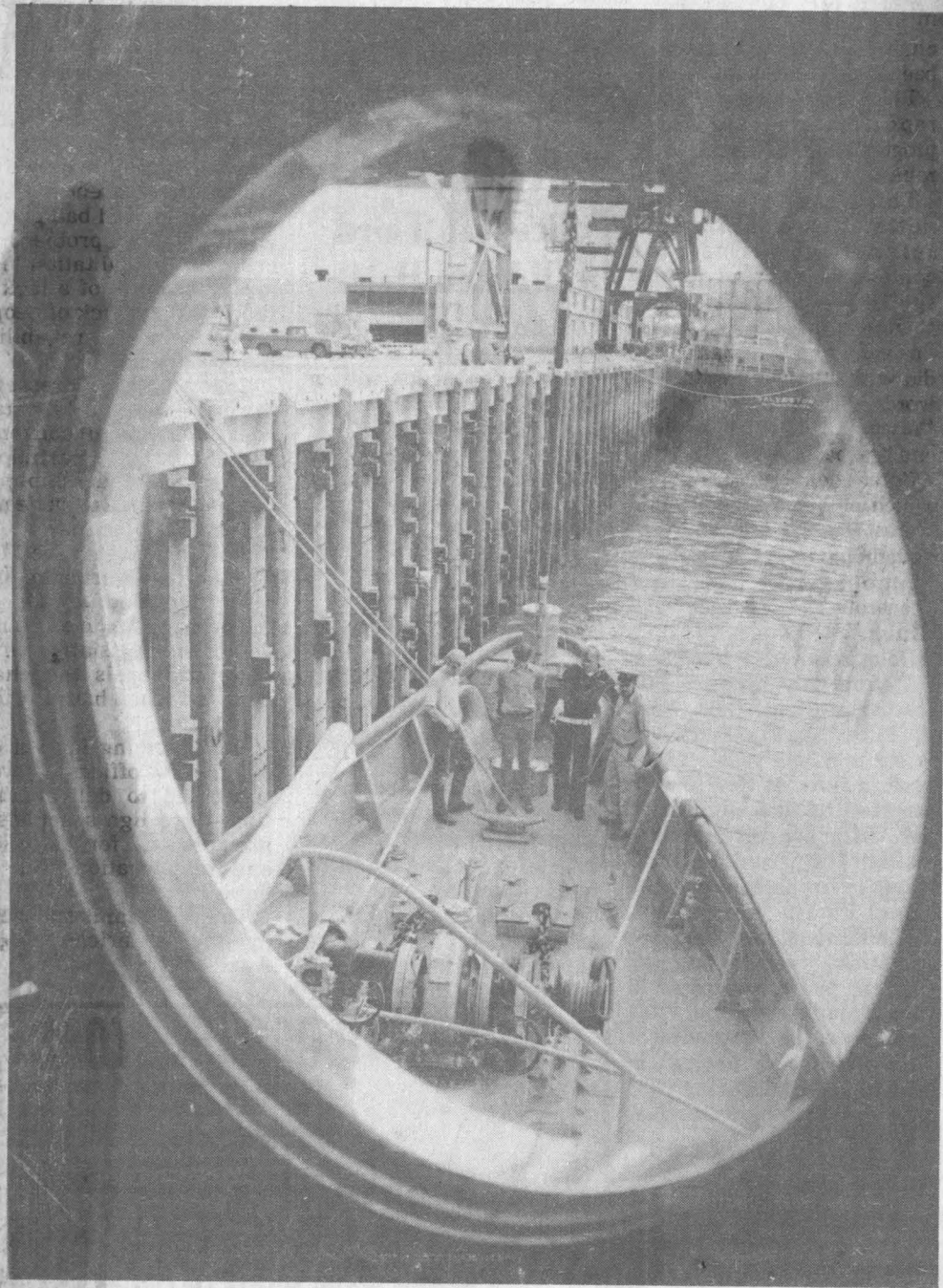
As a result, the Cocopa was far below the dock's edge and visitors were required to "slide" down the ship's ladder for a look around. But getting back ashore was little problem, as most visitors were so intrigued with the ship they stayed long enough for tides to rise.

Even though the Cocopa is referred to as a tug, she doesn't even resemble standard, harbor-bound models. Sporting a displacement of 1,730 tons and a range of 10,000 miles, she's a class with the most powerful ships.

The Cocopa carries about 75 officers and men, who

work on five levels and decks.

Adak will be home for the USS Cocopa and her sizable crew during the next three months.



FLEET TUG GETS ANCHORAGE VISITORS

The veteran fleet tug Cocopa, ATF-101, nearly missed its own open house Wednesday, as tides dropped the ship far below the dock. But several hearty Alaskans managed to descend the ship's ladder and get the grand tour. Looking through

the pilot house, Times photographer Jim Martin caught visitors and members of the ship's crew on the Cocopa's bow. Stationed in San Diego, she is in Alaska for search and rescue operations out of Adak Naval Air Station.



HIGH AND DRY AT LOW TIDE

Several small boats are left aground by low tide at the boat facility on Ship Creek behind the Miller Dalton Boatyard. The \$156,000 facility was opened Wednesday by the State Department of Public Works. The City will operate this interim facility while the Corps of Engineers conducts a feasibility study on

a full-scale small craft harbor for Anchorage. The department says no permanent moorage will be allowed, and use is limited to periods of high tide. This picture was taken by Times photographer Alice Puster from an Era Helicopters of Alaska, Inc. helicopter.

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PARTY PASTRY AT THE PORT

Denny Sarrels, son of Assistant Port Director Gene Sarrels, came to the Port of Anchorage anniversary celebration all decked out in a new sailor suit. Times photographer Alice Puster

managed to catch him decorating it with some icing from the birthday cake. Denny will celebrate his first birthday on Saturday.

2 Anchorage Daily Times Wednesday, July 7, 1971

Port Celebrates 10th Year

By JOETTE GETSE
Times Staff Writer

There's going to be quite a party at 9:30 a.m. Thursday when the Mayor, City Council, Port officials and civic leaders gather at the Port of Anchorage to celebrate the port's 10th anniversary.

These people, who have participated in the battles to develop a port facility and watched it grow, will be the first to say that it wasn't easy, but the city did it.

Port Director Erwin Davis and the Port Commission, composed of Chairman Arne Michaelson, Wallace Martens, B. J. (Bob) Logan, Albert Kowalski and William O'Neil, have invited former port commissioners, local publishers and broadcasters and the general public to cut the cake and help celebrate.

Awards of recognition will be presented to Robert B. Atwood, Alvin O. Bramstedt,

Mrs. Lawrence (Kay) Fanning, A. G. Heibert, Roy Robinson, Patricia Harpel, Carl Bracale, Robert Fleming and Joe O'Hearn for their continued support of the port facility.

A special 10-year service award will be presented to Mrs. Henry (Eva) Tessier, the only person employed at the port since its opening.

Coinciding with these festivities will be a visit from a training squadron of the Japanese Navy, scheduled to dock at 4 p.m.

Speeches by Mayor George Sullivan, City Manager Robert Sharp and other officials will recall some of the past and focus on the future of the port, Davis said.

That past dates back much further than 10 years. The first money the city ever expended was in 1927 when it committed \$1,000 to a joint effort with the Alaska Railroad for a dock at the mouth of Ship Creek he

said. It was not until 1959 that construction of an \$8 million facility, including a general cargo terminal and a petroleum facility, began. The project took two full years due to trade union strikes and other setbacks.

At that time the ports of Seward and Whittier were the main docks and all merchandise to Anchorage was shipped from those ports to the city either by rail or barge. This double handling of goods resulted in higher prices for the Anchorage consumer.

Said Davis, "The people of Anchorage built this port without any commitments on trade. They bet on the future and it paid off."

After the port was opened in 1961, the city administration and port commission struggled to keep rates low and to build up traffic. The leasing of lands

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and their use was much debated, as the records show, and no decision about the port was made hastily.

In 1964 two things happened to boost the port. Sea Land Freight Service Inc. made a commitment to bring 52 ships a year into the port along with the most modern of cargo handling equipment.

The second event, the Good Friday earthquake, caused Anchorage to suffer some damage, but it played havoc with the Seward and Whittier ports and changed the traffic pattern such that Anchorage became the main Alaskan port.

"Even if the quake had not occurred, the traffic pattern would have changed, says Davis. "With 60 per cent of the market in Anchorage it is cheaper to ship totally by water."

During the following years tonnage increased steadily at the port and the city sought expansion. A long-term expansion program designed by a consulting firm called for a second general cargo dock to the north of the first one. But first a new repair facility was built, access roads were added and sewer facilities installed.

In 1966 the state conveyed 366 acres of tidelands to the city. A giant crane which revolutionized cargo handling, Super Sam, by name, was installed. And the second wharf was begun.

The port was riding high, so to speak, and port officials announced the facility would be open on a year-round basis. By 1967, through the efforts of Commission Chairman Wallace Martens and then Gov. Walter Hickel the rates on ocean freight were reduced under an agreement with the Trans Pacific Conference of Japan.

However, it was the harsh Alaskan winter that took the wind out of everyone's sails when ice conditions in the port damaged the pilings of the second dock beyond repair. Studies and litigation took the better part of the spring. Finally the City Council decided to tear the pilings out and start anew with another firm.

By June 1967 all traces of the wrecked dock were removed. In February 1968 a new port extension plan was unveiled. It would be 270 feet long, cost \$1.3 million and accommodate vessels of up to 35,000 tons.

In 1968 litigation concerning the tidelands began and the city won the first round. But the federal government declared it would appeal the decision.

By October 1968 the second dock was completed and talk of another extension began. The port study was lengthened to include 1990 and development of the surrounding acreage.

Today the plans for expansion of the dock both to the north and south are being formulated. But the port has many unsolved problems, such as the removal of the old railroad dock that sits as a crumpled eyesore in the harbor. Responsibility for its removal has been shunted back and forth between the railroad, Army and city for years and the solution seems no closer today than it did 10 years ago, says a city spokesman.

The questions of oil company leases, land development, construction of a state dry dock, the federal government's right to retain title to the terminal reserve and the formation of a strong statewide port association are facing the city and port commission today and in the next 10 years.

But for tomorrow, at least, everyone can sit back and look at the 1.8 million tons the port handled last year and just be satisfied.

2—Anchorage Daily News, Thursday, July 8, 1971

Japanese training squadron arrives

At 4 p.m. today the training squadron of the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Group will be arriving in Anchorage. It is the second time the squadron has visited Anchorage and their arrival will be highlighted with many special events.

Before entering the Upper Cook Inlet the fleet will make a brief stop at Homer. The ships, Katori and Yamagumo, will then proceed to Anchorage. Before tying up at the city dock there will be an exchange of gun salutes — 21 guns for the flags and 15 guns for the commanders.

The ships are the at-sea training classes for 200 cadets and are manned by an additional 500 officers and crew.

After docking has been completed, Anchorage Mayor George Sullivan will call on the squadron commander and welcome him and his crew to Anchorage and Alaska.

On Friday the 200 cadets will visit Ft. Richardson and Elmendorf Air Force Base before leaving on a tour of Portage Glacier and sightseeing in Anchorage.

At 3:30 p.m. Friday the squadron commander, Rear Admiral Umeichi Imai will lay a wreath on the Japanese Soldiers' Graveyard at Ft. Richardson.



Capt. Kohei Katagiri, squadron chief of staff

Anchorage Daily News, Thursday, July 8, 1971

A celebration today at the Anchorage Port

Probably no one will break a bottle of champagne across the face of the dock, but there will be a birthday cake to help celebrate the 10th birthday of the Port of Anchorage today.

A group of notables, including Mayor George Sullivan, the City Council, Port Director Erwin Davis, port officials and a number of civic leaders will gather at the port at 9:30 a.m. today to wish the facility a happy 10th.

In fact, on hand for the occasion will be a training squadron from the Japanese Navy, which will tie up at the dock at 4 p.m., coinciding with the celebration.

The public is invited to drop in and have a piece of cake and shake hands with the dignitaries, including the five-member Port Commission.

Several local publishers and broadcasters will receive awards recognizing the help they have rendered to the port. Honored will be Mrs. Kay Fanning of The Daily News; Robert B. Atwood, Alvin O. Bramstedt, A. G. Heibert, Roy Robinson, Patricia Harpel, Carl Bracale, Robert Fleming and Joe O'Hearn.

In addition, Mrs. Henry Tessier, the only port employee who has been there since the port was inaugurated, will receive a special service award.

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USS Anchorage To Be In Port Next Month

The USS Anchorage, a three-year-old, dock landing ship, will stop here Aug. 21 en route from the Orient to the West Coast.

A reception for the ship's crew and passengers is planned by the Anchorage Council of the Navy League, says its president, Jerry Herrington.

The Navy's 553-foot long ship carries a crew of 21 officers and 286 enlisted men. It can carry an additional 31 officers and more than 400 combat troops.

The ship couples a well deck, mezzanine deck and flight deck with a system of ramps, allowing vehicles to be loaded by boat, crane or helicopter.

The ship will remain in port through Aug. 25. It will be open to the public from 1 to 5 p.m., Aug. 22 to 25.