

Port parking 'snug' on holiday

by Karen Robin
Times Writer

The Port of Anchorage will be facing the ultimate parking problem next week when seven U.S. Navy warships come to call.

Fitting seven ships in a space meant for four will make the Downtown parking problem seem pretty minor.

Other Alaskan ports also are welcoming ships for the Fourth of July. Ships will be docking in Juneau, Kodiak, Seward and Ketchikan.

Navy ships will find space tight

But in Anchorage, the port has only four terminals, or berths, for the cruiser, frigates and minesweepers. Not only that, but the normal commercial shipping operations must continue.

"It'll be snug," said Eric Morrison, the port's assistant director, but there will be room.

And they won't even have to pay to park, since the port is expected to waive docking and

wharfage fees, a customary courtesy for the military, Morrison said.

The cruiser, the USS Truxtun which is serving as flagship for Rear Adm. Jonathan T. Howe commanding the Cruiser, Destroyer Group 3, will tie up alongside the petroleum dock at the southernmost end of the pier.

At the next berth, in front of the break bulk cargo warehouse,

the two fast frigates, the USS Harold P. Holt and the USS Brewton, will lash side by side with only one ship along the pier.

The minesweepers, under Commodore T.A. York and Mine Group 1, will dock in pairs at the north Roll-on/Roll-off terminal.

Each of the four minesweepers, the USS Excel, the USS Implicit, the USS Enhance and the USS Gallant, are 172 feet long and will fit neatly alongside the 1,011-foot berth side by side.

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Coast Guard cutter launches tours

Crew searches for smugglers

by Earl Swift
Times Writer

Local landlubbers have a chance to get a taste of the seafarin' life this weekend in tours conducted by the officers and crew of the visiting U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Boutwell.

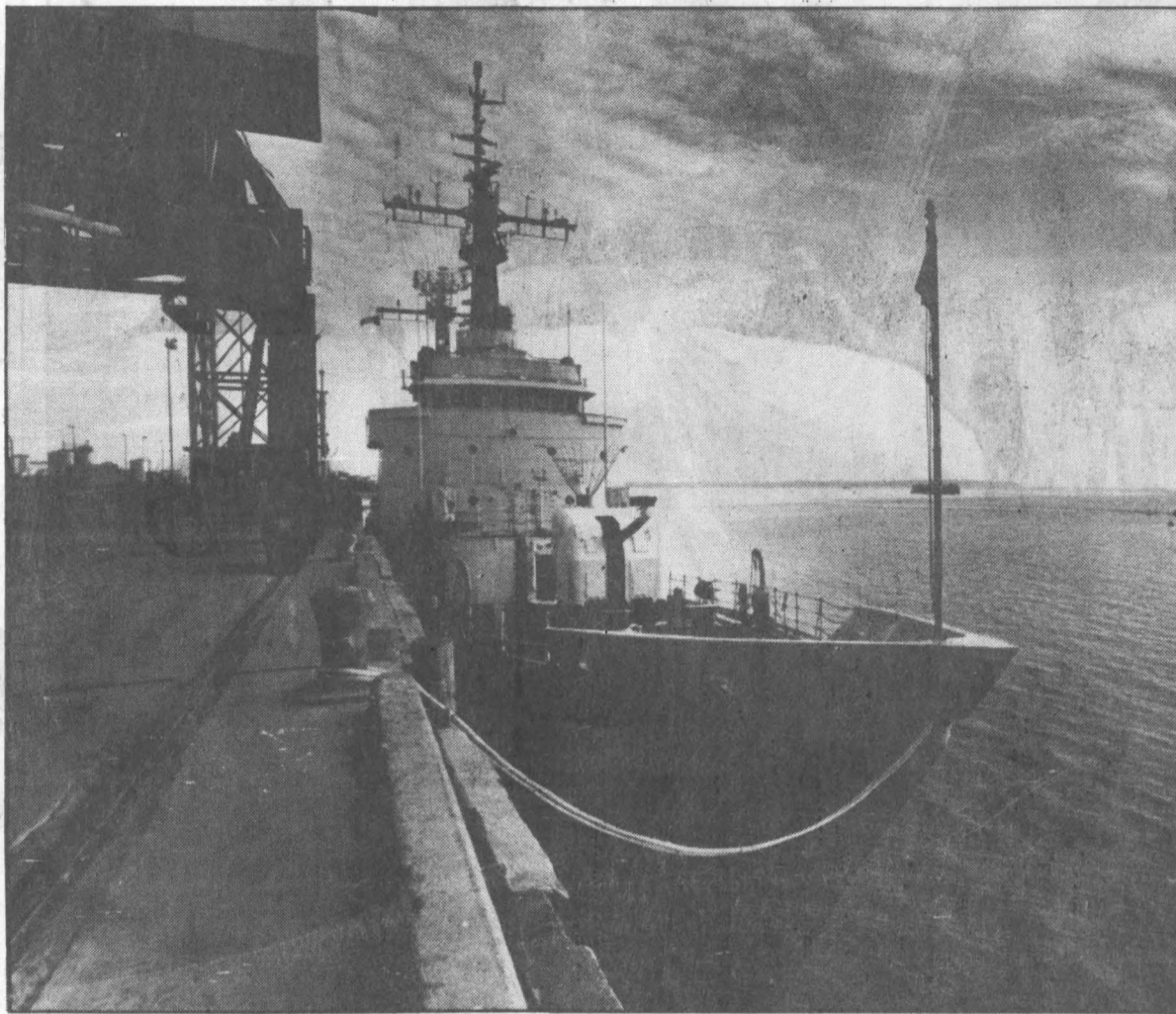
The 378-foot ship, one of 12 such Coast Guard vessels and one of the largest cutters afloat, pulled into its berth at the Port of Anchorage Friday. It is the mid-point of a two-month patrol cruise of the North Pacific Ocean.

Launched in 1968 and outfitted with twin 20mm canons and a 5-inch bow gun, the ship is used as a peacetime law enforcement patrol vessel and doubles as an anti-submarine ship during war.

Its decks will be open for public tours from 1 to 4 p.m. today and Sunday.

One of a dozen "secretary class" cutters named for former secretaries of transportation, the Boutwell hosts 20 officers and 156 crewmen, Ensign Joel Dodds, the ship's communications officer, said Friday.

In addition to state-of-the-art navigation and communications gear, the ship features a bow propulsion unit, or BPU, and controllable pitch screws. The former allow the Boutwell's officers to swing the cutter's bow around — or move it from side to side — using hydraulic pumps.



Times Photo by Wendt K. Brown

The 378-foot U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Boutwell, one of the largest afloat, will be open for tours

Unique to secretary class ships, the BPU permits the Boutwell to "walk" sideways, Dodds said, and can whip the ship into a tight turn impossible in most large vessels.

The ship's screws, meanwhile, can be adjusted in pitch to reverse the vessel's direction without slowing the pro-

pellers' speed — a feature that can bring the Boutwell from its top speed of 29 knots to a full stop within the ship's own length, he said.

Dodds said the cutter will remain in Anchorage through Monday, when it will set sail for Kodiak. Expected to arrive at the island port Wednesday,

the Seattle-based ship will take on an HH-52 helicopter and crew for the second half of its patrol. The patrol will take it into the Pacific in search of smugglers, fishing violators and other seaborne wrongdoers.

The patrol cruise is scheduled to end July 27, Dodds said.

Anchorage runs a tight port

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When the Navy ships arrive Wednesday, a Sea-Land Freight Service ship will be finishing its cargo operations at the Container Terminal and will leave that day, only to be replaced shortly by the Sagafjord, a luxury passenger ship, Morrison said.

While they are in port, they will have to play a form of musical chairs to make room for a Totem Ocean Trailer Express ship due to unload its cargo later in the week at the Roll-on/Roll-off Terminal.

Morrison said the four mines-

weepers probably will move back to the Container Terminal or perhaps move out to anchor in Cook Inlet.

But, he added, "Once the big ships are in, they're in to stay," and the cruiser and the frigates will not be shifting around the pier.

The ships are expected to arrive early Wednesday with the high tides. Welcoming ceremonies, including the "Wild About Anchorage" critters, will take place at noon.

Similar ceremonies will take place when the Navy ships dock at the other Alaskan ports welcoming the Navy to town for the Fourth of July.

A public affairs officer at the U.S. Navy's 3rd Fleet, headquartered in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, said Ketchikan will host the USS Robert E. Peary, a fast frigate.

He also confirmed the minesweepers, the USS Esteem and the USS Pledge, will be at Seward for the holidays.

Kodiak will have a destroyer, the USS Harry W. Hill, and two minesweepers, the USS Conquest and the USS Constant.

Juneau will welcome two destroyers, the USS Kinkaid and the USS Cushing.

Ship tours will be available. The ships in Anchorage will be open on July 4, 6 and 7 from 1 to 4 p.m.



Harmony first European vessel to dock at Port of Anchorage

The Harmony, a Danish-owned 440-foot trans-steamer of Panamanian Registry, recently was the first European vessel to ever dock at the Port of Anchorage. The vessel contained a cargo of equipment and technical supplies. It also brought empty reefers (refrigerated containers) to return to Europe with a cargo of Alaskan fish. Shown here is gold dredging equipment being unloaded from the vessel, bound for a Girdwood mining company. The visit culminated some two years of efforts by the Port Authority of Anchorage to develop an Alaska/European maritime trade connection. AIC PHOTO BY NANCY CAIN SCHIFF



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Third Fleet to visit Alaska ports

A flotilla from the U.S. Navy's Third Fleet will visit several Alaska ports next week with the majority of them coming to Anchorage. Other ships in the flotilla will dock at Juneau, Seward and Kodiak, officials said. Docking at Anchorage will be the nuclear-powered USS Truxtun, two fast frigates, the USS Brewton and the USS Harold E. Holt, and four minesweepers. Two destroyers, the USS Kinkaid and the USS Cushman will dock at Juneau while Seward is the destination for two minesweepers and Kodiak for the destroyer USS Harry W. Hill. Afternoon tours of the vessels will be scheduled sometime during the Navy's July 3-7 visits, officials said.