



Signalman 3rd Class Sam Stroud prepares the flags of the USS Truxtun for 'Dress Ship' — a ceremony where all the ships' flags are displayed at once, during special occasions. 7-6-85 Times

Navy ships offer residents view of military life at sea

Times Staff

The U.S. Navy's visiting ships provide local residents — accustomed to seeing and hearing about the Army and Air Force — with a first-hand chance to see the hardware and lifestyle of a rather different military service.

From 1 to 4 p.m. today and Sunday, the public will be welcome for tours aboard the seven gun-metal-gray ships at the Port of Anchorage.

The largest of the visiting ships is the USS Truxtun, a 9,000-ton cruiser, bristling with guided missiles capable of des-

troys targets up to 200 miles away.

She is designed to defend aircraft carriers from surface or air attack. The ship's Terrier guided missile system also can hit high-altitude, high-speed aircraft.

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Navy ships open for tours

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She also carries weapons to attack ships or shore emplacements up to 50 miles from her guns' muzzles. Her regular radar, limited to 20 miles of range, is often supplemented by airborne radar readings for long-distance firing.

The ship draws its power from two nuclear reactors, allowing her to spend up to 90 days at sea without being resupplied. Crew members sometimes joke, though, that after 70 days the food is not as good as they'd like it to be.

The ship was launched in 1964 and served several tours of duty in Vietnam.

Both the USS Brewton and the USS Harold E. Holt, two of 46 fast frigates originally designed by the Navy for anti-submarine warfare, are also open for tours.

With the ships' recent addition of Harpoon Anti-Surface missile systems — permitting them to now fill a surface warfare role — they also protect amphibious or support forces, serve as a coastal defense and escort military convoys.

The fast frigates' principal armament consist of anti-submarine torpedoes, which can be launched with a variety of delivery systems.

The 5,000-ton warships boast 5½-inch bow guns, each capable of firing 34 rounds per minute at a maximum range of 10 miles.

On each ship's stern sits an

SH2 Sea Sprite helicopter, equipped with sonar to detect submarines.

In the Harold E. Holt's combat information center, sailors point out an 8-by-10-inch photograph of a Soviet V2 submarine, proudly explaining how the ship helped force the submarine to the Pacific Ocean's surface when the underwater craft ventured too closely to American ships during naval operations 18 months ago.

The Holt, named in honor of the late Prime Minister of Australia, uses the Australian ensign — the Southern Cross on a blue field, with the Union Jack in its upper right corner — as its battle flag.

The Australian koala bear — painted on doors and in the form of tiny, stuffed mascots — is visible throughout the ship.

The Brewton is the only Navy vessel named for a sailor. John Brewton was killed in Vietnam, while serving with the Navy's elite commando unit.

According to the Brewton's captain, Commander R.D. Horner, one of the ship's proudest moments came when she bore the unknown serviceman's body from the Vietnam conflict between Pearl Harbor and Alameda, Calif., from where it was then taken to Washington, D.C.

The ships are part of the Third Fleet's Cruiser, Destroyer Group Three, based in Pearl Harbor, and are intended to offset a Soviet military buildup in the North Pacific.

Also docked at the pier are four Washington-based minesweepers: the USS Excel, USS Implicit, USS Gallant and USS Enhance, named to reflect the special qualities they and their crews must have to enter mined waters.

They are built with non-magnetic materials to avoid setting off mines sensitive to the metal hulls of most ships.

These ships were built in the 1950s with double wooden hulls — up to 18 inches thick in some sections.

Instead of cutting through the water and heavy seas like the larger ships, they bob on its surface, much like a cork. In rough water, the Implicit's motto — translated from Latin to Wooden Ships, Iron Men — comes to have special meaning.

The ships' bridges feature cloth roofs, removed during sweep operations so if a mine is set off, the crew will be blown off a vessel, instead of into something. Below decks, the ceilings are padded.

But exploding mines is their mission. Working in formations, the ships use a variety of means to set off the explosive traps, designed to explode when a ship passes nearby.

The weapons, which follow several designs, detect ships through either the approaching vessels' magnetism, actual contact with the ships, or through the sound of their propellers.

Navy reservist gets home in ship shape

by Karen Robin
Times Writer

When the USS Gallant sailed into the Port of Anchorage, one of her crew was just catching a ride back home.

"A lot of the guys think I'm nuts" to fly on standby to California every month to put in Naval Reserve time, said Frederick R. Dietz of Anchorage. Flying standby is free, he said, but the travel time can take as long as four days.

Dietz is in the U.S. Navy Reserve, and the trip to Anchorage was part of his annual training obligation.

He flew down to the San Francisco Bay area to board the USS Gallant, a minesweeper, and

Free shuttle buses set to ship riders

Times Staff

A free shuttle bus will be operating continuously between Downtown and the Port of Anchorage this weekend, city officials announced late Friday.

The bus service is scheduled for 1 to 4:45 p.m. today and Sunday. Buses will leave from the corner of Third Avenue and A Street to carry passengers to the U.S. Navy flotilla visiting Anchorage.

sailed north for a week and a half to Portland. After a three-week break, he caught up with his ship again in Kodiak and sailed on into Anchorage.

Dietz became a resident of Anchorage last year after five straight years of visiting family here.

Now, he flies to California once a month for weekend duty and once a year for his two-week tour of duty.

"But I enjoy it," he said, "and as long as you enjoy what you're doing..."

He has been a selected reservist on the Gallant since 1974. That

is to say, he was selected as a crewman for the ship and if it is ever called into active duty, he will be aboard.

"I had the opportunity to go shore duty," he said, "but I don't because I get tired just sitting in the classroom. At sea, you're working at your job, you're part of the team."

Despite an age difference between the mid-50ish Dietz and his shipmates, mostly in their 20s and 30s, they get along well.

"I don't advertise my age on board," he said. "I like to keep them guessing. If you told them everything, then they wouldn't have any reason to bug you."

Dietz has been in the military, See Reservist, page B-2

Seattle firm signed to repair dock

by Ken O'Toole
Times Business Writer

More than \$1 million worth of repairs and improvements are expected to begin soon on a Port of Anchorage dock damaged in March by the 800-foot-long freighter Great Land.

Jenson & Reynolds Construction Company of Everett, Wash., was awarded the job for its low bid of \$1.1 million. The firm is expected to submit signed contracts, a performance bond and insurance certificate to the port by early next week, said Henry Hickey, port purchasing and contracting officer.

The work on Terminal No. 3 must be completed by Oct. 31, according to the contract. But work must begin soon for completion of some of the work because of the higher tides that begin in late August and continue through late September, Hickey said.

Repairs associated with the accident include removal of five different sections of concrete on the dock surface, piling removal in three separate sections, removal and replacement of timber fenders, and installation of steel pipe piling, Hickey said.

Twelve pilings were knocked out in the crash, and 18 will be replaced, said Eric Morrison, assistant port director. Also planned is the addition of two Yokohama fenders — rubber floating buffers — measuring 12 feet by 21 feet. Other improvements

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Dock

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will include replacement of a number of dock power systems and replacement of a section of lifting crane tracks, he said.

Five companies had bid to repair the port's northernmost dock, which sustained damage to at least 14 pilings when the freighter owned by Totem Ocean Trailer Express, Inc. rammed it while trying to make an early morning U-turn in Cook Inlet.

An engineering report estimated repairs would cost \$2.34 million. Bids ranged from a low of \$1.1 million to a high of about \$1.78 million.

When the bids were found to be much lower than the estimate, it was discovered that an error had been made in the calculations and the engineering estimate was revised, Hickey said.

Port director Tyler Jones wrote in an Anchorage Assembly memo that Totem is expected to reimburse the city \$336,438 for repairs resulting from the collision, plus \$131,130 for general dock repairs and modifications.

Take the bus to port display

After the July 4 tidal wave of visitors, the city will provide shuttle bus service for those who want to visit the Navy ships berthed at the Port of Anchorage today and Sunday.

"We had approximately 13,000 to 15,000 people down here, and cars parked from the port to the railroad depot," said Assistant Port Director Eric Morrison of the situation Thursday. "We had people walking better than a mile to get here and we had cars backed up past the (Ship Creek) bridge."

The buses will run continuously between the city parking lot at Third Avenue and A Street and the port from 1 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. both days, Morrison said.

The navy ships, including the guided missile cruiser USS Truxtun, may be toured between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Reservist returns

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off and on since World War II, when in 1944 he became an active naval reservist out of Boston, Mass., near his home in Lawrence.

After 14 months of duty he was released and two years later he joined the Massachusetts National Guard.

"They had a fast talker as a First Sergeant," he recalls. "I

was going to a movie one night and I saw some activity in the armory. I just went in to see what was happening and I walked out a National Guardsman."

He stayed with the National Guard, even while working two other jobs and raising a family of six children with his wife.

When he moved to Palo Alto, Calif., in 1957, he was discharged automatically from the National Guard.

He wanted to return to the Navy, but found that "getting back into the reserves wasn't easy," because he had more dependants than the normal three that the reserve would pay for.

Finally in 1974, two of his five sons joined the Naval Reserve and the Naval Sea Cadets program.

"I went down to sign for them and asked the Chief, 'What do you have for me?'"

When the recruiter found Dietz was a diesel mechanic, he offered him a position.

"And that's when I joined the Gallant," Dietz said. He is an Engineman, 2nd Class.

All of the minesweepers are in the reserves, rather than on active status in the Navy. A core crew is assigned to each of the ships which train reservists.

Those reservists put in long days, working their posts eight hours, followed by more duty on watch.