

# WELCOME ABOARD USS PRAIRIE AD 15



**“THE OLDEST  
AND  
THE BEST”**

*A UNIT OF COMMANDER NAVAL SURFACE FORCE PACIFIC*

## A WORD FROM PRAIRIE'S COMMANDING OFFICER



Welcome aboard the finest tender in the Pacific Fleet!

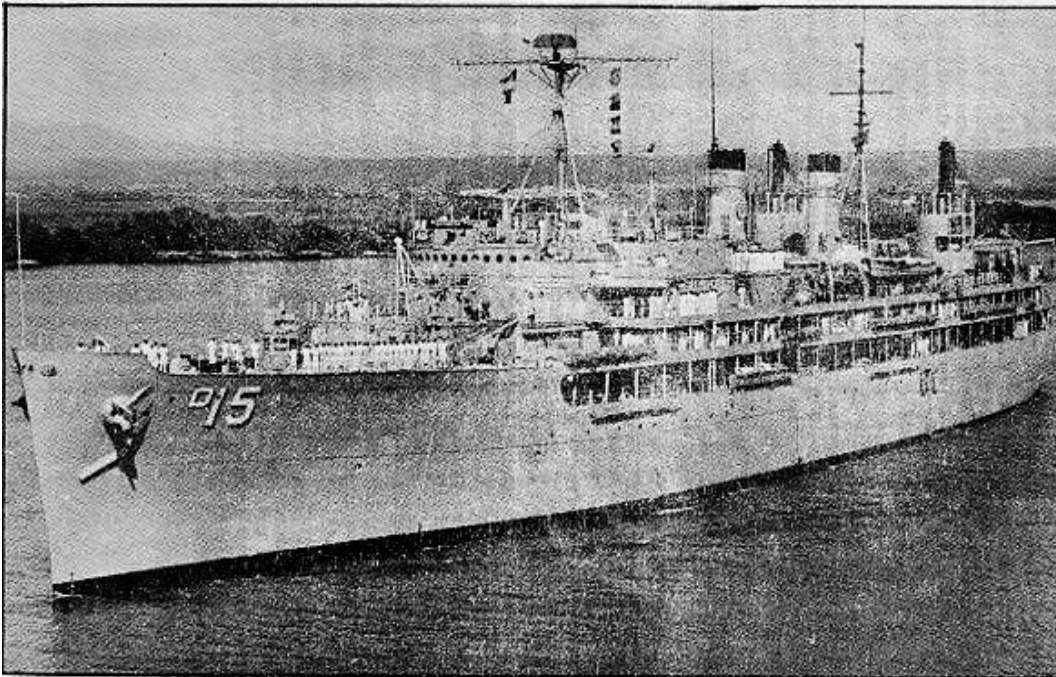
Classified as a 16,000 ton Fram MKII conversion class destroyer tender, PRAIRIE's primary mission is to serve as a mobile repair facility for Fleet ships. Named for a geographic area--as destroyer tenders traditionally are--PRAIRIE calls to mind the wide open grasslands of Americas mid-West.

As a "mobile shipyard", she is capable of making most repairs required by destroyers frigates and other ships of the Fleet. PRAIRIE is also called on to provide logistic support, and often provides supplies and support services to ships that she tends.

Her crew is a collection of highly skilled specialists trained to maintain and repair ships equipment and systems, ranging from a small clock to the main propulsion system on any of the Navy's newest ships.

I hope you have an opportunity to meet these people and witness the professional and dedicated manner in which they perform their duties. It is the outstanding work of her crew that continues to add to PRAIRIE's motto as "The Oldest And The Best".

Stephen J. Duich  
Captain USN



USS PRAIRIE AD 15

General Information

Length--530 Feet

Width --74 Feet

Displacement--18,019 Tons

Fuel capacity--  
1.1 Million gallons  
diesel fuel marine

Maximum speed--17.5  
Knots

Endurance--23,000 miles  
at 9 knots

Weapons--4-20MM gun  
mounts

Keel laid -7 December  
1938

Launched--9 December  
1939

Boats--1 LCM-6  
(Landing Craft  
Mechanized)

1 Diving boat  
1 Captain's gig  
1 Officer's motor  
boat

3 Utility boats  
2 Motor whale  
boats

72 Rubber life  
rafts

3 Paint punts

Commissioned--5 August  
1940

Homeport--Long Beach,  
California

## PRAIRIE's History

On 5 August 1983, USS PRAIRIE celebrates the completion of her 43rd consecutive year of service to the Fleet. Few naval vessels have ever reached this milestone. It takes a special ship to survive the rigors of service during three wars and remarkable sailors to maintain her at full operational readiness.

When PRAIRIE slid down the Camden ways of New York Shipbuilding Corporation, few observers could have foreseen that this new destroyer tender would so successfully serve her nation. Storm clouds kindled by old European animosities were being eyed with dread by America when PRAIRIE was placed in commissioned service a year later on 5 August 1940. For her first three years in service, she nursed the critical needs of American and Allied warships in the Atlantic.

She then turned her attention to the brutal conflict in the Pacific. PRAIRIE carried badly supplies and performed crucial repairs for the island-hopping units, reversing the tide of Japanese aggression. Majuro Atoll, Marshall Islands, Eniwetok, Ulithi and the Carolinas were familiar places to PRAIRIE crewmembers of that era. After a period in Tokyo Bay, she returned to San Francisco for overhaul and a well-deserved rest in the fall of 1945.

In 1947, from her homeport of San Diego, PRAIRIE started her first peacetime deployment to the Western Pacific--tending ships at Tsingtao, China and making port visits to Shanghai, China and Yokosuka, Japan. The following year, PRAIRIE earned the first of her seven Battle Efficiency Pennants.

In 1951, PRAIRIE once again responded to an urgent call for fleet support as war broke out in Korea, and was later commended by Commander Seventh Fleet for meritorious service in performance of vital repair services to combatant ships of the United Nations.

Following another WESTPAC deployment and service as flagship for Commander Task Force Ninety-five, COMCRUDESPEC, and COMSEVRON Three; PRAIRIE set out in 1956 on what is believed to be the only world cruise for a ship of her type. During the tour, she made stops in Bahrain, Persian Gulf, Karachi, Pakistan; Capetown, Union of South Africa; Rio De Janeiro, Brazil and returned to San Diego after a transit through the Panama Canal.

After four more years of regular WESTPAC tours, PRAIRIE underwent Fleet Rehabilitation and Modernization in 1961. With new facilities to support and repair the more modern destroyers continually entering the Fleet, PRAIRIE completed normal cycles of tending ships locally and deployments to WESTPAC preparing the "Ready Seventh Fleet" for its tremendous responsibilities.

In June of 1982, PRAIRIE distinguished herself by becoming the first Pacific Fleet tender to successfully complete an Intermediate Maintenance Availability on FFG 7 Class Guided Missile Frigate.

During PRAIRIE's 43 years of active duty, she has accumulated a notable service record through three wars and 23 WESTPAC cruises. PRAIRIE and her proud crew of 900 men and women look forward to many more years of providing the finest Fleet repair service available to the U.S. Navy--always living up to her motto, "The Oldest And The Best".