

# WELCOME ABOARD



**U.S.S. CHIPOLA (AO-63)**





## HISTORY

Named after a river flowing through Georgia and Florida, USS Chipola (AO 63) has a long, if interrupted, career since her launching at Sparrows Point, Maryland on 21 October 1944.

Chipola was commissioned on 30 November 1944 in plenty of time to engage in action in the Pacific Theater of World War II. She received three battle stars for her refueling of Combat ships in the campaigns at Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and Third Fleet Operations against Japan. Chipola was on hand for that historic moment when the instrument of surrender ending WW II was signed aboard USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

After the War Chipola served as a tanker transporting fuel from literally one end of the world to the other, making about twenty trips around the world while so engaged.

Upon the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, Chipola served with the Seventh Fleet for which participation she earned the Korean Service Medal and the United Nations Service Medal. On 1 August 1955, shortly after the war's end, Chipola was placed out of commission. Her rest was a fairly short lived one as she was recommissioned on 29 September 1956 as an MSTS tanker. In this capacity she carried fuel along the East coast of the United States until she was again placed out of commission on 7 November 1957.

Chipola remained in "moth balls" until September 1960 when she was once again called on by the Navy to resume her role in the Service Force. Outfitted and readied for sea, she was recommissioned in Baltimore, Maryland on 17 December. One month later she left those snowy climes and arrived at her new homeport in Pearl Harbor on 10 March 1961.

Since 1961, Chipola has completed seven cruises with the Seventh Fleet in the Western Pacific. During these cruises she has earned the reputation as a highly reliable member of the Service Force team. Chipola has been awarded three Meritorious Unit Commendations, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Korea), the Vietnamese Service Medal with Campaign Stars, and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. In addition, as a result of winning five consecutive Battle Efficiency "E's" Chipola became the first Service Force ship in the Pacific ever to win the Gold "E" and only the third ship in the Pacific Fleet history to be so honored. She currently displays the Battle Efficiency "E" for fiscal year 1971.





COMMANDER TERRY G. CASTON, USN

Commander T. G. Caston enlisted in the U.S. Navy in February 1947. He was assigned to USS Benner (DDR 807) in June of 1948. In May 1951 he attended Enlisted Submarine School at New London, Connecticut, followed by assignment to USS Flying Fish (AGSS 269). Following duty in Flying Fish, he was assigned to the New London Submarine Base.

Upon graduation from Officer Candidate School, in 1955, he served aboard USS Redfin (SSR 272) and USS Sea Leopard (SS 483). In 1961 he attended General Line School at Monterey, California, followed by a one year tour as Commander Submarine Group, San Francisco Representative. After receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from the U. S. Navy Post Graduate School, Monterey, California, he was assigned in December 1964 as Executive Officer, USS Rasher (AGSS 269). In 1967 he was assigned to the Staff, Commander Antisubmarine Warfare Pacific. In December 1969 he was assigned as Executive Officer of USS Hassayampa (AO 145).

Commander Caston is married to the former Miss Valerie Gildemeester of Vancouver, British Columbia. The Castons have four children, Terry, Robert, Richard, and Deborah.

## CHIPOLA'S ROLE IN THE FLEET

Chipola's mission as a fleet oiler is to deliver fuel to ships underway at sea. In this task, Chipola acts to multiply the combat capabilities of the Fleet. For example, if the Navy did not have fleet oilers and ammunition ships, about three times as many aircraft carriers, cruisers and destroyers would be required to maintain the level of combat action in Tonkin Gulf as are actually used. This is because men-of-war would have to return to port to replenish fuel and ammunition about once a week. This would waste time in transit to and from port severely limiting the amount of time each ship could spend on station. Thus it can be seen that Chipola's real role is to multiply the combat capability of the Fleet.

In addition to supplying ship and aircraft for fuel at sea, Chipola performs several less obvious services for the Fleet. While transferring fuel to her customers, Chipola also supplies fresh produce, repair parts, pressurized gases, movies, and mail. She also transports personnel, speeding medical care, duty station changes, and leave for men of the Fleet. In this way, Chipola serves not only material needs, but also enhances the morale of Fleet customers.

In its efforts to maximize Fleet effectiveness through imaginative and responsive support, Chipola has performed many unusual tasks. These include such unorthodox services as a large gunnery target sled on deck in order to offer surface gunnery practice opportunities to combatant ships before or after refueling them.



## MEASUREMENTS AND CAPACITIES

LENGTH .....553  
BEAM .....75  
DRAFT LOADED.....32 4½  
FULL LOAD DISPLACEMENT .....24,800 TONS  
MAXIMUM SPEED .....18 KNOTS  
MAXIMUM CARGO LOAD .....4,901,400 GALS  
MAXIMUM PUMPING RATE .....13,400 GAL PER MIN

## COMMANDING OFFICERS OF THE CHIPOLA

**CDR ELMORE GENTHNER, USNR**  
30 NOV 1944 - 30 MAR 1946

**CDR PAUL F. HEERBRANDT, USN**  
23 AUG 1947 - 14 JUL 1948

**CAPT CHARLES R. GILLIAM, USN**  
23 AUG 1949 - 24 MAR 1951

**CDR DUCON P. DIXON, JR., USN**  
7 JUN 1952 - 22 MAR 1953

**CDR KENNETH L. BUTTLER, USN**  
15 NOV 1954 - 1 AUG 1955

**CAPT ROBERT W. RYND, USN**  
17 DEC 1960 - 20 DEC 1961

**CAPT THOMAS L. HORNER, USN**  
13 APR 1963 - 6 MAY 1964

**CAPT JOSEPH A. GRACE II, USN**  
24 JUN 1965 - 2 JULY 1966

**CAPT L. W. KELLEY, USN**  
11 JUN 1967 - 7 NOV 1968

**CAPT CHARLES S. CHRISTENSEN, JR., USN**  
29 APR 1970 - 9 OCT 1971

**CDR THOMAS C. GREEN, USN**  
30 MAR 1946 - 23 AUG 1947

**CDR CLAUDE L. WEIGLE, USN**  
14 JUL 1948 - 23 AUG 1949

**CDR CHARLES S. HUTCHINGS, USN**  
24 MAR 1951 - 7 JUN 1952

**CDR OLIVER D. FINNICAN, JR., USN**  
22 MAR 1953 - 15 NOV 1954

**CDR SELWYEN H. GRAHAM, JR., USN**  
29 DEC 1955 - 7 NOV 1957

**CAPT WILLIAM E. WESTHOFF, USN**  
20 DEC 1961 - 13 APR 1963

**CAPT WILLIAM M. HARNISH, USN**  
6 MAY 1964 - 26 JUN 1965

**CAPT ROBERT B. BALDWIN, USN**  
2 JULY 1966 - 11 JUN 1967

**CAPT KEITH W. SHARER, USN**  
7 NOV 1968 - 29 APR 1970

**CDR TERRY G. CASTON, USN**  
9 OCT 1971 -