Contributed by Michael Nuzzo Jr.
A Message from the Commanding Officer of USS Achernar

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you aboard Achernar since it affords an excellent opportunity to get acquainted with the Navy. We want you to learn as much as possible about our ship during your stay on board. This pamphlet has been prepared with the hope that it will help you to feel at home and make this occasion a memorable one.

The Attack Cargo Ship is one of the most versatile ships in the United States Navy. In participating in amphibious assaults on distant shores, this ship transports and lands assault equipment with attendant troops, ammunition, and supplies by means of embarked landing craft and by transport helicopters provided by other ships.

The Officers and Men of Achernar are proud of your Navy and they are particularly proud to be members of a Navy-Marine Corps team which has become a unique force for maintaining peace throughout the world.

I hope that you will enjoy your visit with us.

[Signature]

Commanding Officer

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERISTICS

Overall Length: 459 Feet
Beam: 63 Feet
Displacement: 13910 Tons
Speed: 16 Knots
Armament: One 5 inch 38 calibre dual purpose gun and four twin 40 MM anti-aircraft gun mounts.
Complement: 429 Men.
BRIEF SHIP’S HISTORY

The USS Achenar (AKA 53) was built by the Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company at Kearney, New Jersey, and was originally placed in commission on 13 January 1944. Outfitting and alterations were carried out at the Navy Yard. Achenar was originally supplied at Hampton Roads and conducted shakedown in the Chesapeake Bay.

Achenar departed from New York Port of Embarkation, Staten Island, on 19 March 1944 for her first operational mission. This mission was to participate in the Invasion of Normandy as deputy headquarters ship of the U.S. 1st Army and the U. S. 9th Army Air Force. During the actual landings Achenar survived several enemy air attacks and upon departure from the landing area carried casualties that were received on board from other ships of the landing force and the invasion beaches. She proceeded to Plymouth Sound, England, where these casualties were discharged.

13 August 1944 found Achenar at sea in Convoy SF-1 on her second operational mission. This mission was to participate in the landings for the invasion of Southern France. Upon completion of this mission, Achenar proceeded to Hampton Roads, Virginia, where general repairs and routine overhaul were accomplished.

Achenar was then assigned to the Pacific Fleet and proceeded through the Panama Canal to the War in the Pacific. Okinawa was to be her next engagement. While participating in the invasion in the early hours of 2 April 1945 a Japanese suicide plane carrying a five hundred pound bomb struck the ship on the starboard side of number three hatch. Severe damage was suffered in electronic equipment and the hull itself. Forty six casualties, including five killed, were suffered by this hit. This ended the wartime career of the Achenar.

Following World War II, Achenar was assigned to the Military Sea Transportation Service for “Magic Carpet” duty. Runs were made between the West Coast of the United States and the Pacific Islands carrying cargo.

The Korean action found the Achenar back in the role of an active amphibious ship. She participated in the Inchon landings in September 1950 and transported troops from Japan to Wonsan. She later operated with Amphibious Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet until placed out of commission on 18 May 1956.

Achenar again joined the active Fleet as a member of Amphibious Forces, Atlantic Fleet, in November 1961. Her mission once again is to contribute to the overall amphibious assault capability of the United States Navy as a part of our increased readiness position.
Vanguard in Peace...

Amphibious Force
U.S. Atlantic Fleet
... Spearhead in War
Commissioning Ceremony
USS ACHERNAR (AKA 53)
28 November 1961

Band Selections
Naval Air Technical Training Band,
Memphis, Tennessee
ENSIGN Stanley SURBER, USN, Director

Welcome
CAPTAIN Donald F. QUIGLEY, USN
Commanding Officer, USS ACHERNAR (AKA-53)

Invocation
CAPTAIN Samuel B. BENNETT, CHC, USN
District Chaplain, EIGHTH Naval District

Introduction
CAPTAIN Donald F. QUIGLEY, USN

Remarks
REAR ADMIRAL Frederick B. WARDE, USN
Commandant, EIGHTH Naval District

Address
CAPTAIN Neville LEVY, USNR (RET)

Commissioning
REAR ADMIRAL Frederick B. WARDE, USN

Assumption of Command
CAPTAIN Donald F. QUIGLEY, USN

Set the Watch
Ship's Company, USS ACHERNAR (AKA 53)

Benediction
CAPTAIN Samuel B. BENNETT, CHC, USN

Reception in the Crew's Mess and Wardroom
SHIP'S OFFICERS

Commanding Officer ....................... CAPT Donald F. QUIGLEY, USN
Executive Officer ......................... CDR Stanley H. BRITTINGHAM, USN
Operations Officer ........................ LCDR Francis P. REARDON, USN
Communications Officer .................. LTJG Tom EDIE, USN
Combat Information Officer .............. ENS Peter M. PHILLIPES, USN
Electronic Material Officer .............. ENS Richard D. MACKIE, USN
Assistant Communications Officer ...... ENS Ronald M. PEREIRA, USN
Navigator ..................................... ENS Robert R. RUTHERFORD, USN
Personnel Officer ............................ ENS William H. BAUER, USNR
First Lieutenant ...................... LTJG Donald D. DISPIRITO, USNR
Gunnery Officer .............................. ENS Richard V. WILSON, USN
Assistant First Lieutenant ............. ENS Dominic A. FITZPATRICK, USNR
Ships Boatswain ......................... CHBEN George H. SWEENEY, USN
Boat Group Commander .................... ENS Thomas C. BRUGMAN, USNR
Assistant Boat Group Commander ......... ENS Frederick A. GOLL, USNR
Engineering Officer ...................... LT Francis J. DUNIGAN, USNR
Damage Control Officer ............... LTJG William J. FLYNN, USN
Main Propulsion Officer ................... ENS Edward J. FLYNN, Jr., USN
Auxiliaries Officer ......................... ENS Henry H. BEAM, USN
Repair Officer .............................. ENS William J. RUSSONELLO, USNR
Electrical Officer ............................ ENS Alan G. GEISLER, USNR
Supply Officer .............................. LT Vincent J. PISTOLESSI, USN
Assistant Supply Officer ............. ENS Clarence C. DUNLAP, USNR

SHIP'S CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS

CALDO, William J., QMCA \ JORDAN, Ellis M., GMCA
CHESHIRE, Horvey L., Jr., BTC \ LENEAVE, William P., BMCA
EUBANK, Walter J., SKCS \ MC MEKIN, Richard L., YNCA
FULLER, Rayford H., SDCA \ SCHEFERMAN, Robert J., RMCS
GEISLER, Clarence (N), Jr., SPCA \ THOMAS, Lee E., SMCA
JESTER, Hildred E., EMC \ TOKACH, Albert A., MMC
JOHNSON, Don H., ENCA \ WHEELER, Emmett D., GSCA