

SOME ITEMS OF INTEREST ABOUT U.S.S. BAYFIELD (APA-33)

This abbreviated pamphlet has been prepared to acquaint you with some of the history of BAYFIELD and with some of her more interesting characteristics.

BAYFIELD is an APA (Auxiliary Personnel Attack) -- an attack transport. The gray color, the large white letters and numerals on the bow, the thin commission pennant or division commander's pennant flying from the mainmast -- these serve to identify her as a naval vessel. She was built by the Western Pipe and Steel Company at San Francisco, California and was launched on 15 February 1943, and was christened "SEA BASS." Later she steamed to the East Coast and was converted to an APA by the Atlantic Basin Iron Works of Brooklyn, N. Y., during the fall of 1943. She was given the new name BAYFIELD, in honor of Bayfield County, Wisconsin. The first part of her career was under the Coast Guard (a part of the U. S. Navy during wartime). Then she was taken over by the Navy proper and manned by naval crews.

The basic design is that of a Maritime Commission C-3 cargo ship. For naval use, she was converted to be able to carry troops. She is nearly 500 feet long and can make 18 knots (20 miles per hour). After conversion was completed, the BAYFIELD was ready to accomplish the basic mission of an APA, which is not only to transport fully equipped combat troops to the vicinity of action, but to land them over the beaches in her own boats. She must also land the necessary vehicles and equipment to support these troops at the time and place they are needed. The success of the assault landing may be entirely dependant upon how well this battle function is accomplished.

Early in 1944, BAYFIELD participated in the assault on the Normandy beaches. After taking further part in the invasion of Southern France, she proceeded to the Pacific and participated in the storming of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

After V-J Day, the "Mighty B", as her crew called her, continued her job of carrying troops, except that now it was the joyful journey of the "Magic Carpet", bringing war-weary fighting men back to the States. A little rest for the crew and repairs to the ship made the BAYFIELD ready for the new historic "Operation Crossroads," where she served as an evacuation transport, removing crews from the atom bomb target ships.

Upon completion of "Operation Crossroads," she entered another phase of her career, which, although not as dangerous as her wartime work, followed the basic pattern. The war was

ended but the necessity of maintaining a trained Amphibious Force was apparent. She, like all the ships in the Navy, entered into an intensive program of continuous training. During this period she called at Pearl Harbor; Guam; Tsingtao, Shanghai; Balboa and Panama Canal Zone; Morehead City, North Carolina; Norfolk; San Diego; San Francisco; Olympia and Bremerton, Washington. While in China, during turbulent Chinese Civil War days, BAYFIELD with the 9th Marines aboard, she showed the Stars and Stripes in Shanghai, standing ready to evacuate American Nationals.

With the outbreak of hostilities in Korea in the spring of 1950, the "Mighty B" once again answered the calls to arms. Transferred from the Atlantic to the Pacific Fleet and operating under the flags of Transport Squadron ONE and Transport Division FOURTEEN, she took part in the Inchon, Chinnampo and Wonsan operations, and in the redeployment of troops from the beaches of Hungnam to Pusan. After nine months in Far Eastern waters she returned home to prepare herself for missions yet to come.

In August 1951, she was ordered back to Japan to transport troop reinforcements, returning to the West Coast in September 1951.

Following a repair period in the fall of 1951, the BAYFIELD began intensive training for her return trip to the Far East, participating in the largest amphibious training operation ever conducted on the West Coast - LEX BAKER ONE.

In March 1952, she returned to Japan with the Commander Transport Division FOURTEEN embarked. After being diverted via Pearl Harbor, the BAYFIELD arrived in Japan, marking the beginning of one of the most intensive operational training phases in her long eventful career.

She participated in every major amphibious operation conducted during this tour in the Far East, including two trips to Korea. She operated four months off Hokkaido, the northern most major island of Japan, training regimental combat teams of the army contingent stationed on that island, the objective being to keep ground troops ready for amphibious assault and keep the enemy off balance due to the ever present threat of such an operation.

While operating off Hokkaido, she visited the ports of Otaru, on the northeast coast; Muroran, on the south coast; Yufutsu and Mombetsu, on the southeast coast.

Following her participation in the largest amphibious diversionary operation north of the 38th parallel since the beginning of the Korean conflict, she visited Hong Kong for rest and recreation.

She returned to Japan in November 1952 and left for the United States in December, arriving in Long Beach for the Christmas Holidays.

After spending 100 days in the Long Beach Shipyard for emergency repairs she took part in LEX BAKER TWO. Upon completion, she had her regular yard overhaul at Pearl Harbor.

In November 1953, BAYFIELD returned to the Far East.

Since the beginning of hostilities in Korea, the "Mighty B" has steamed more than 88,000 miles, over three times around the world in the execution of assigned tasks. In order to perform these varied missions, the ship must be nearly self sufficient. Internally the organization of the ship is divided into seven departments.

The Operations Department maintains necessary radio communications, concerns itself with the ship's operations and movements in advance; coordinates the offensive and defensive action of the ship in battle.

The Navigation Department is responsible for the safe navigation of the ship and knows at all times of day or night the position of the ship.

The Deck Department, which includes the activities of the First Lieutenant and the Gunnery Officer, maintains the hull and equipment against the corrosive influence of the elements; provides the majority of men for manning the ship's guns; lifts and handles cargo and boats; and with the engineers, mans the landing craft in carrying out the basic mission of assault landing on the beaches.

The Engineering Department operates and maintains the main engines and boilers; distills from the sea, the water used on board, about 40,000 gallons per day; repairs and maintains a wide variety of equipment, such as diesel engines, gasoline pumps, radars and radios, electric motors and generators.

The Supply Department undertakes the complicated business of keeping the ship provided with all sorts of provisions and material which are required for ordinary maintenance and for scheduled operations. This department, in particular, keeps voluminous records. Additionally, it is popular because it pays the ship's personnel twice a month. It's commissary personnel are capable for providing well-prepared, well-balanced meals for about 1700 men, by operating on an almost round-the-clock schedule. We are exceedingly proud of how well our man are fed.

The Medical Department provides a physician, a staff of medical corpsmen, and hospital facilities to care for the health of the crew and embarked troops.

A Dentist takes care of the dental needs of all embarked personnel.

A Chaplain is usually on board to care for the spiritual needs of all hands and to aid the Commanding Officer in matters of morale and welfare. When a Chaplain is not embarked, divine services for all are nevertheless provided.

We of the BAYFIELD know that the readers of this pamphlet are not now fully informed about all the details of the ship. We do hope, however, that the reader will now see the ship, not only as a steel hull with appropriate fittings, but also as an organization of selected, trained individuals, each doing his specialized job; the whole coordinated to the end that, when required, we can land our troops on a hostile beach at the right time, at the right place, and ready to win in the most unfortunate want of threat to our freedom which results in hostilities. We have the utmost confidence in our ability to carry out our part of any task.