

# Launching Ceremonies

DECEMBER 7, 1974

U.S.S. ROANOKE, AOR-7  
FLEET REPLENISHMENT OILER

BUILT FOR THE UNITED STATES NAVY

BY NATIONAL STEEL AND SHIPBUILDING COMPANY  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA





**NORMA H. WEISNER, Sponsor**

Norma H. Weisner was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, November 24, 1917, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Smith. After graduating from high school in Knoxville, she attended the University of Tennessee, earning a degree in home economics in 1941.

Mrs. Weisner first met her husband, Admiral Maurice F. Weisner, Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet, in her hometown, where they attended high school together. On May 30, 1942, Norma H. Smith and then Ensign Weisner were married in Knoxville. They have three sons, Maurice Hall, Franklin Lee and Stewart Holland.

As the wife of a naval officer, Mrs. Weisner has traveled widely, living on both the East and West Coast and in Hawaii, as well as in Japan and the Philippines.

She has been actively involved in the Navy Relief Society and civilian community affairs.

Among her other interests are shell collecting, various crafts, tennis and golf.



**JANE CLARK WILSON, Matron of Honor**

Jane Clark Wilson, the wife of Lieutenant General Louis H. Wilson, Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, was born in Meehan, Mississippi, January 3, 1921. She attended elementary school in Jackson, Mississippi and graduated from Jackson Central High School in 1938. In 1942, she graduated from Millsaps College in Jackson, earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in psychology.

Mrs. Wilson taught school for two years after graduation. On November 14, 1944, Jane Clark and then Captain Wilson, whom she had met while in high school, were married in Mississippi. The Wilsons have a daughter, Janet Louise, born in 1956 at Camp Pendleton, California, and currently a sophomore at Auburn University.

Having lived both on the East and West Coasts, Mrs. Wilson currently resides in Hawaii where she is active in the Hawaii Women's Chapter of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. Her other interests include needlepoint and flower arranging.

NOBODY LIKES TO FIGHT . . . BUT SOMEBODY HAS TO KNOW HOW . . . ENLIST IN THE U.S.M.C.

LAUNCHING CEREMONIES, U.S.S. ROANOKE, AOR-7

BAND CONCERT—*U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot Band and Frank Pena's Mariachi Band*

COLOR GUARD—*U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot*

CAPTAIN J. T. DIMINO, CHC, U.S.N.—*Eleventh Naval District Chaplain*

JOHN V. BANKS—*President, National Steel and Shipbuilding Company*

REAR ADMIRAL WILLIS C. BARNES, U.S.N.—*Assistant Deputy Commander, NavSea, Weapons, Systems, and Engineering Directorate, and Commander, NavSec*

ADMIRAL MAURICE F. WEISNER, U.S.N.—*Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet*

MRS. MAURICE F. WEISNER—*Sponsor, U.S.S. Roanoke, AOR-7*

MRS. LOUIS H. WILSON—*Matron of Honor, U.S.S. Roanoke, AOR-7*

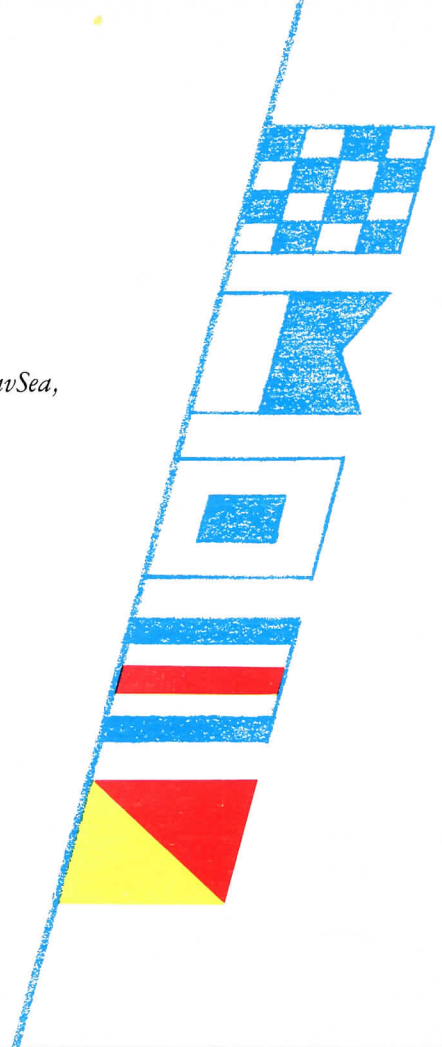
KEEL LAYING CEREMONY

Howard Ross—*President, Worth Oil Transport, Inc., Hull 394, 90,000 DWT San Clemente Class Tanker, For Third Group Inc.*

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

John M. Murphy—*Vice President, Sales, National Steel and Shipbuilding Company*

*IF EVERYBODY COULD GET INTO THE MARINES . . . . IT WOULDN'T BE THE MARINES . . . . ENLIST IN THE U.S.M.C.*





## SPECIFICATIONS

Design—AOR-7

Length—658 feet

Beam—96 feet

Speed—20 knots

Total Displacement—37,450 tons

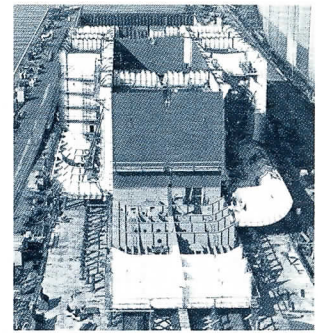
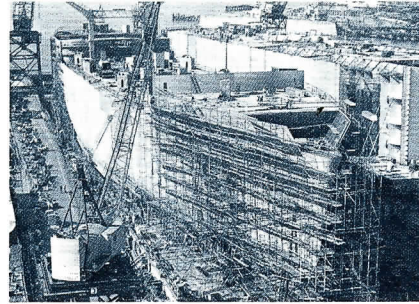
Total Deadweight—23,975 tons

Normal Shaft Horsepower—28,000

Crew: Officers—30

Enlisted—427

Keel Laid—19 January 1974 by Rear Admiral Fillmore B. Gilkeson, U.S.N.  
Commandant, Eleventh Naval District



BE SOMETHING SPECIAL . . . . ENLIST IN THE U.S. NAVY

## CHRISTENING HISTORY

In 1811, George III of England, introduced the feminine element in shipbuilding. Anxious to afford his daughters some stature in the public eye without depleting the royal purse, he struck on the idea of having them sponsor naval vessels, and the custom has with very few exceptions persisted. Prior to that time, launchings were men's affairs, with ships sliding down the ways with little or no ceremony.

Historically, launchings have carried with them a sense of significance most likely because, more than at any other stage in vessel construction, launching represents birth. And as in birth, this significance is tensioned by a moment of truth aspect. This "moment of truth" is generally recognized as a time when a hull structure undergoes its severest test, as the majority of its weight is concentrated at two spots, the bow and the stern. And the speed gathered down the ways is sometimes the fastest it ever attains.

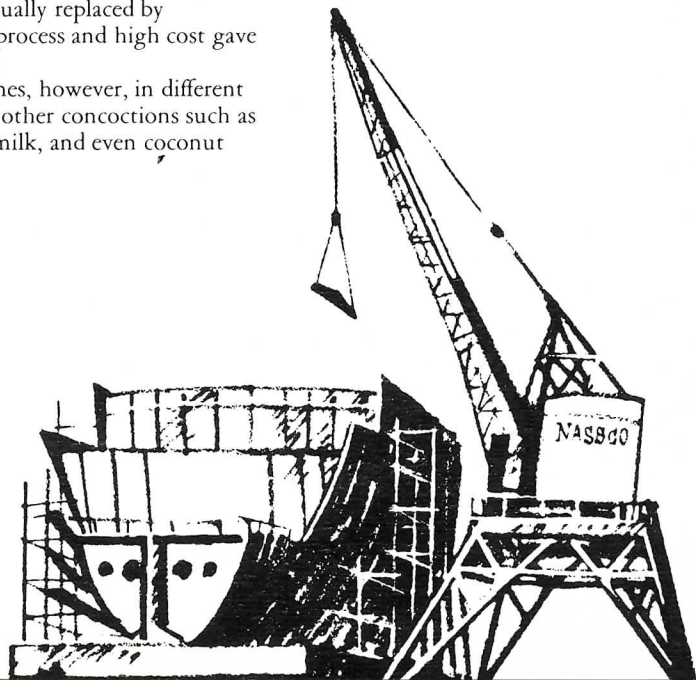
To the Vikings, a ship launching was a serious matter. They believed that nothing important could be accomplished without someone dying in the process and as a result, they would lash slaves or prisoners to the ways immediately prior to a launch. When slaves or prisoners were scarce, livestock was substituted.

It was the English to the rescue. During the reign of the Tudors, it was custom to launch a vessel with a pedestal on the poop, where a silver cup of red wine was placed. After the launch, the king's representative (in these days still male) would drink to the vessel's future, spill the wine at the four Cardinal compass points on the vessel's deck to represent the bloodshed ritual, and then heave the cup overboard as a final cavalier gesture to Neptune.

Red wine was eventually replaced by champagne as the aging process and high cost gave it a more princely cachet.

There have been times, however, in different parts of the world, when other concoctions such as water, ginger-ale, goat's milk, and even coconut milk have been used.

FLY WITH NAVY . . . . ENLIST IN THE U.S. NAVY



**NATIONAL STEEL & SHIPBUILDING COMPANY**