

BEFORE THE MEDITERRANEAN...

The USS HOIST has had an interesting history since she was first commissioned. Her first year, during the war, was spent in the Pacific. She then transited the Panama Canal in July 1946, for permanent transfer to the Atlantic Fleet.

HOIST was first homeported in Bayonne, New Jersey until 1951, when she was finally assigned to her permanent homeport of Norfolk.

During 24 years of commissioned service HOIST has visited every major port on the Atlantic seaboard, as well as port visits to Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Dominican Republic, British West Indies, Bahamas, England, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Scotland, Portugal, Netherlands, Newfoundland, and Greenland.

Prior to 1960, the ship was called upon six times to transit Arctic regions around Greenland for operations. In addition, HOIST has made four deployments to the Mediterranean since 1964.

During her deployment to the Mediterranean in 1966, HOIST participated in the recovery operations of a missing H bomb that was lost in the crash of a B-52 bomber off the coast of Spain. The bomb was successfully recovered in April 1966. HOIST received the Navy unit Commendation Medal for her role in the recovery operation.

On the next deployment to the Mediterranean, HOIST was again called upon to fulfill her salvage mission. On 6 February 1968, the USS BACHE (DD-470) went aground outside of Rhodes, Greece. HOIST spent fifty days attempting to save the vessel. During salvage operations, however, several bad storms further damaged the BACHE which precluded the possibility of refloating the ship. Ammunition and fuel oil were offloaded, and the ex-BACHE was stricken from the Navy and disposed of.

HOIST was also called upon to aid in the search for the missing nuclear submarine USS SCORPION (SSN-589), in May of 1968. An advanced diving system (ADS IV) was placed aboard in the event the submarine was found.

Other notable operations which HOIST has participated in include the salvage of the USS TRAVERSE COUNTY (LST-1176) which went aground in 1959 at San Salvador, British West

Indies, the salvage of the USS MONSSEN (DD-798), which went aground in 1962 at Beach Haven Inlet, New Jersey; operations with TRIESTE II diving systems in 1964, used in conjunction with the investigation of the loss of the nuclear submarine THRESHER; and participation in the Gemini Space Program as a standby recovery vessel.

During May of 1969 HOIST participated in SUBSALVEX 69, an exercise in which the ex-HAKE (AGS-256) was sunk in 110 feet of water in the Chesapeake Bay. HOIST worked with the USS PRESERVER (ARS-8) to successfully salvage the submarine in two and one half weeks. The operation provided needed experience in submarine salvage.

MISSION

As a unit of Mobile Logistics Support Force, to provide salvage, repair, diving, and rescue services to the fleet.

DESIGNED TASKS

1. To salvage, provide salvage lifting, repairs and tow to repair yards or safe waters, ships which are battle-damaged, stranded, beached, sunk, or abandoned at sea.
2. To perform towing-at-sea operations.
3. To be capable of extinguishing the fires of ships in distress at sea.
4. To provide for facilities for major diving operations to 180-foot depths.
5. To be capable of limited self-defense.
6. To be capable of making lifts of submerged objects up to 150 dead-weight tons.