



U. S. S. DELTA AR-9

U.S.S. DELTA SHIPMATES ASSOCIATION.

HISTORY OF THE U.S.S. DELTA

Dear DELTA Shipmate:

The Auxiliary Repair Ship U.S.S. DELTA (AR-9) was built in 1941 by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co. located in Newport News, Virginia. She was built as a Matson Line cargo ship, the "HAWAIIAN PACKER", and was designed for use on "The Pineapple Run" between San Francisco and Honolulu. Before completion, the United States entered World War II, and she was acquired by the U.S. NAVY. Because of her large tonnage (14,000) she became a NAVY cargo ship and was commissioned the U.S.S. DELTA (AK-29) on June 16, 1941. She was named after the star "DELTA".

During her first year in the NAVY, she carried cargo from ports on the East Coast to Guantanamo Bay Cuba, Puerto Rico, Bermuda, Argentia Newfoundland, Halifax Nova Scotia, and Reykjuik Iceland.

As the Navy grew in WWII and as the war spread geographically, the need for Mobile Repair Bases grew rapidly. On July 1, 1942, DELTA was sent to the Cramp Shipyard in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was decommissioned as the (AK-29) and an extensive repair job undertaken to convert her into a Fleet Repair Ship. On completion, of the conversion, she was recommissioned as a Fleet Repair Ship the U.S.S. DELTA (AR-9). In her new capacity, she sailed on March 3, 1943 to join a convoy headed for North Africa.

On March 19, 1943, she set to work repairing amphibious craft in Mers-El-Kebir, Oran. As the war moved so did DELTA. Late July 1943 Bizerte Tunisia, March 1944 Palermo Sicily, July 1944 Pozzuoli Italy. At Pozzuoli her job was to get ships and landing craft ready for the invasion of southern France. In August 1944 she went to Naples Italy to repair the damaged amphibs. On the last day of September 1944, the hard-working (AR) steamed back to Bizerte via Palermo to repair landing craft being returned to the United States. In November 1944 she was detached from the Amphibs and returned to Mers-El-Kebir for duty as a destroyer repair ship for Commander Destroyer Squadron Sixteen.

In April 1945, DELTA arrived back in the States. After armament modifications and general repairs, she left Norfolk Virginia on June 15, 1945 for Pearl Harbor, via the Panama Canal. She reached Pearl on July 6, 1945, worked there a month and then sailed for Eniwetok on August 5, 1945. The surrender of Japan was announced while DELTA was at Eniwetok. She was ordered to rendezvous with Commander Task Group 30.8 off the Islands of Japan and on August 28, 1945 entered the Sagami Sea with advance units. She moored off Yokosuka Naval Base where she was assigned to General Fleet Repair work attached to Commander Task Group 53.9. One of the jobs that she did there was to get the Japanese Battleship NAGATO in shape for the 1946 atomic bomb tests at Bikini. She saw China service in the year following the war's end. In 1947 she was decommissioned and placed in Reserve Fleet at the Philadelphia Naval Yard and remained in that status until the Korean Conflict.

On November 1, 1950, the DELTA was put back into commission at Philadelphia, Penn. After her shakedown, she left the East Coast in February 1951 for duty in the Pacific Fleet at San Diego California under Commander Service Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

After working out of San Diego for more than a year, DELTA headed overseas in June 1952 for Yokosuka Japan, where she was a part of Service Squadron Three, supporting the United Nations Naval Forces in the Far East. In September 1952 she was assigned to Task Force Seventy-Seven.

In February 1953, DELTA returned to California and worked out of San Diego and Long Beach for seven months before returning to the Far East. This time she saw service at Sasebo and Yokosuka Japan and at Subic Bay, Philippine Islands. In July 1954 she

returned to San Diego and joined Service Squadron One.

DELTA'S next Far East tour began in January 1955, during which she spent part of her time as the Flagship of Commander Blockading and Escort Force, Pacific Fleet. She returned to the West Coast in July 1955 and the following month was ordered to the Naval Yard at Puget Sound, Washington for deactivation. She was decommissioned on December 1, 1955 and became a unit of the Bremerton Group, Pacific Reserve Fleet.

On October 31, 1959, the DELTA was recommissioned by the crew of the U.S.S. KERMIT ROOSEVELT, an internal combustion repair ship, at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington. The DELTA immediately sailed for Long Beach, California which was assigned as her new homeport.

On April 12, 1960, she sailed once again for the Far East. As a unit of the U.S. Seventh Fleet and Service Squadron Three, she provided repair service in Sasebo and Iwakuni, Japan and in Subic Bay, Philippine Islands. On December 21, 1960, DELTA returned to Long Beach for what was expected to be an eighteen month stay. Again the need for a repair ship in the Far East sent DELTA back to the Western Pacific on short notice. On February 2, 1962 she departed CONUS and provided repair services in Sasebo, Okinawa, and Subic Bay. Work was accomplished on Seventh Fleet Ships supporting the U.S. Forces in Thailand and the Taiwan Patrol Forces. DELTA returned from this Far East Cruise on August 20, 1962.

From August 1962 until Christmas Day 1963, DELTA provided repair services to the ships homeported in Long Beach. On the 26th of December, 1963, DELTA deployed to the Far East, this time providing repair services in Subic Bay, Sasebo, Iwakuni, and Yokosuka.

While in the Western Pacific, the DELTA not only served the Fleet, but acted as a good will ambassador for the United States in Hong Kong and Moji, Japan with outstanding success. With her tour completed, DELTA returned to Long Beach for a long awaited overhaul. Upon completion of her yard work, the DELTA again became the work horse of the fleet by rendering her time and talents in repairing units of the Fleet homeported in Long Beach.

On July 1, 1965, the homeport of DELTA was officially changed to Alameda, California, and on July 22, 1965, DELTA again deployed to the Western Pacific providing repair services to the ships of the U.S. Seventh Fleet in such ports as Yokosuka, Subic Bay, Manila, and Kaoshuing, Taiwan. Delta returned to her homeport of Alameda, California on March 15, 1966 and assumed the Flag of Commander Service Squadron Seven, while serving the repair needs of the U.S. First Fleet. On August 2, 1966, DELTA represented Navy ships from the San Francisco area in the Seattle Sea Fair, returning to Alameda on August 12, 1966.

On January 19, 1967, DELTA set sail for her tenth overseas tour, her ninth to the Western Pacific, for duties in support of the Vietnam exposed ships of the U.S. Seventh Fleet. Upon her return to Alameda on August 18, 1967, DELTA had spent a total of eight years overseas away from the United States. DELTA served during the year of 1968 in support of the U.S. First Fleet. She left her homeport of Alameda early in January 1968 to spend the first quarter of the year in the Long Beach area where her services were badly needed. She returned to Alameda in March only to return to Long Beach in May to serve there for two more months. She was once again privileged to represent the many ships from the San Francisco area in the Seattle Sea Fair during the first week of August. Upon her return to her homeport she spent the rest of the year in support of Navy units there.

The beginning of 1969 found DELTA and her crew going through Refresher Training in San Diego and then preparing for another deployment to WestPac. On May 3, 1969, DELTA departed from Alameda for the Western Pacific to support and repair the ships engaged in Vietnam. During her deployment she visited several ports providing not only repairs to the badly pressed ships from Vietnam, but also providing aid to the civilian populace. Some of the ports visited were Hawaii, Taiwan, Philippines, Japan, Hong Kong, and the Vietnamese port of VUNG TAU. During her work in Vietnam, DELTA received the Vietnam Service Medal. DELTA returned to Alameda, California in mid-December 1969. In late 1970, DELTA was again decommissioned and placed in reserve at the Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility, Bremerton, Washington. She remained there as part of the mothball fleet until she was sold for scrap to the Chi Shun Steel Company of Taiwan in August 1983.

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