

***The following writing is stated in an undated 'WELCOME ABOARD' booklet:***

POINT DEFIANCE is the first naval vessel to bear the name of the famous landmark in Tacoma, Washington. Point Defiance was the site selected in 1859 on the northern tip of the Tacoma Peninsula as the location of Fort Steilacoom, an outpost for the Oregon Territory.

The current history of POINT DEFIANCE began on 23 November 1953 when the keel was laid at the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation in Pascagoula, Mississippi. She was built to an overall length of 510 feet, a beam of 84 feet, and a full load displacement of 13,250 tons. The ship was launched on 28 September 1954 and commissioned on 31 March 1955.

Since her commissioning, POINT DEFIANCE has sailed the equivalent of 31 times around the world. The ship has had eleven tours of duty in the Western Pacific including operations in Japan, Korea, the Formosa Straits, Okinawa, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Hong Kong, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The versatility of POINT DEFIANCE and the "Can Do" attitude of her officers and men have been illustrated many times since 1955.

For example, in 1958, POINT DEFIANCE became one of the first rocket launching surface ships when launchers were fitted to her super deck to fire eight NIKE ASP rockets during a solar eclipse for International Geophysical Year.

In October 1962 with troops, equipment, and supplies embarked, POINT DEFIANCE sailed with other units of the Pacific Fleet to the Caribbean area, ready to act if needed during the "Cuban Crisis".

POINT DEFIANCE was called upon once more in April 1963 when she was ordered to transport the bathyscaph TRIESTE from San Diego to Boston. TRIESTE was needed to conduct deep water search operations for the nuclear submarine THRESHER.

Since 1965 POINT DEFIANCE has been involved extensively in the Vietnam conflict. She has participated in many amphibious assaults, transported thousands of troops and their equipment, and supported countless units ashore.

In 1967, POINT DEFIANCE was the primary control ship for the first amphibious assault of the DMZ in Vietnam. During the same operation, she also became the first major amphibious ship to exchange artillery fire with a North Vietnamese shore battery.

POINT DEFIANCE is not only a versatile ship, but is a ship with many firsts to her credit. She is truly a "Workhouse of the NAVY".