

USS THETIS BAY

HISTORY of the USS THETIS BAY

First placed in commission as CVE - 90, in the spring of 1944, U.S.S. THETIS BAY served in WW II as an aircraft transport, providing Logistic support for the fast Carriers of Task Force 38 and 58. She crossed the Pacific Ocean 20 times for a total of 139,551 miles, carrying vital replacements of aircraft, men, and equipment to Naval striking forces engaged in the final battles of the war with Japan.

Her only brush with glamour was when Claudette Colbert, wife of the Medical Officer, cut the commissioning cake on 21 April 1944, in Vancouver, Washington; but, without ships like the THETIS BAY, those glamorous Task Forces which she served would of have come to a grinding halt.

She was built by the Kaiser Shipyard Company at Vancouver, Washington where she was launched on 16 March 1944 and Commissioned on 21 April 1944.

The THETIS BAY earned one Battle Star on the Asiatic - Pacific Area Service Medal for participating in the Third Fleet operations against Japan, 10 - 18 July, 25 July - 15 August 1945; the Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia, for the periods 2 - 8 September, 23 - 27 November 1945 and 5 - 12 January 1946; the American Theater Medal; and World War II Victory Medal.

In January of 1947 the ship was placed out of commission in reserve, and attached to the Tacoma, Washington, Group of the Pacific Reserve Fleet, where she remained until her delivery in May 1955 to the San Francisco Naval Shipyard for conversion into the Navy's first Helicopter Assault Carrier.

Commissioning of the THETIS BAY as CVHA - 1 marks the real beginning of a joint effort by the U.S. Marine Corps to develop and refine doctrine, tactics, and procedures under a new concept... "vertical envelopment." This new concept of assault consist of multiple vertical envelopment from the air joined with surface attacks from the sea. The versatility of three - dimensional assault is thus combined with the mobility of the U.S. Fleet

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It is with considerable pride that the Commanding Officer, the Executive Officer and all hands welcome you aboard.

U.S.S. THETIS BAY is the only Helicopter Assault Carrier in the world - - the first of many to be. The "CV" stands for Carrier, the "H" stands for Helicopter, and the "A" stands for Assault. We carry no planes but Helicopters, with these Helicopters we can land a thousand heavily armed Assault Marines in a short time where ever the General wants to put them down - - behind enemy lines, on top of hills, or

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astride enemy lines of communications. He can spread them out in such a way as to make it impossible for one atomic bomb to destroy them as could be done on an old fashion landing by boats on a small beach. With Helicopters we no longer have to worry about tides, big waves, reefs, and heavy beach defenses.

The ship is about 500 feet long, about 100 feet wide, travels about 18 knots (20 miles per hr.) and weighs about 10,000 tons. The ship has a high speed aluminum elevator which can handle about 18 tons.

The ship's company consist of about 40 Officers, 20 Chief Petty Officers, and 500 Enlisted Men.

The ship is named after a Bay in Southwestern Alaska which was named after a ship which rescued the Greeley Expedition there in 1884. THETIS was a legendary Greek Goddess - - mother of Achilles.

On our last operation (at the cost of \$ 1.28 per man) we ate the following in one day: 1,442 lbs. Of meat, 1,200 lbs. Of potatoes, 764 lbs. Of vegetables, 900 lbs of bread, 1,002 lbs. Of fruit, 640 gal's. Of milk, 48 lbs. Of butter, and 40 lbs. Of coffee. But our engines eat more than we do - - 20,000 gallons of oil producing 9,000 horsepower.

The THETIS BAY like all large Navy ships is a small "city" . We have a Barber shop, Carpenter shop, Machine shop, Tailor shop, and a Electric shop; a laundry, clothing store, general store, bakery, hospital, dental office, post office, refrigeration plant, arsenal, radio center, galleys, and soda fountain. We have a library and a T.V. and game lounge; and the hanger deck becomes a theater in the evenings and a chapel on Sundays.

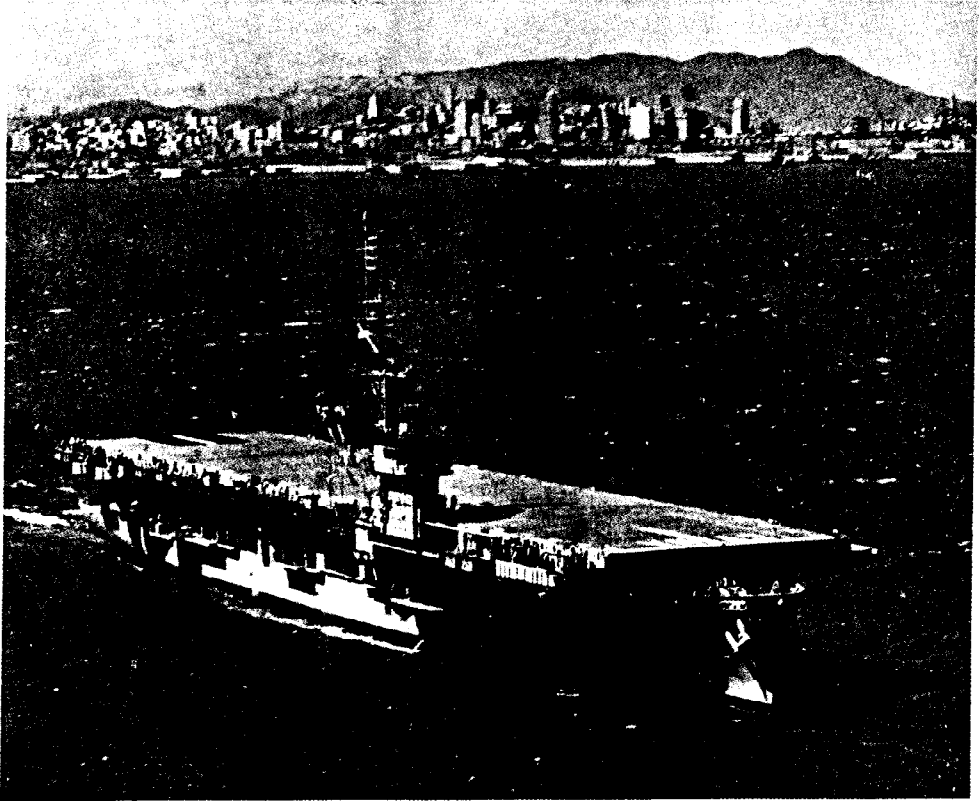
Our ship was recommissioned here in San Francisco last 20 July and we are back for some additional work and repairs. Our home port is Long Beach in southern California, where we have been practicing Helicopter landings with the Marines at Camp Pendleton.

SO, WELCOME ABOARD ! Please feel free to ask questions of your guides or other members of the crew. We hope your visit will be enjoyable and interesting.

We are PROUD to have you with us today

U. S. S. THETIS BAY

(CVHA-1)



THETIS BAY

CVE-90

TYPE
CASABLANCA

KEEL LAID
12-22-43

LAUNCHED
3-16-44

COMMISSIONED
4-21-44

Welcome Aboard!