

NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION (OP-09B9)
SHIP'S HISTORIES SECTION

HISTORY OF USS GEORGE EASTMAN (YAG-39)

USS GEORGE EASTMAN is named in honor of the American industrialist and philanthropist, George Eastman.

George Eastman was born in 1854 at Waterville, New York, and soon became an avid amateur photographer. By mass production of his photographic inventions, he enormously stimulated the development of photography as a popular hobby. He invented a process for making dry plates and established a factory (1880) in Rochester for making the plates. He also devised a roll film and the Kodak camera (1888) to use it, as well as a process for color photography (1928). The Eastman Kodak Company, founded in 1892, was one of the first firms in America to establish a plant for large-scale production of a standardized product and to maintain a fine chemical laboratory; its progressive welfare program included a profit-sharing plan.

Eastman's philanthropies were estimated at over one hundred million dollars; the principal recipients were the University of Rochester and the Eastman School of Music, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Tuskegee and Hampton institutes; Rochester Dental Dispensary and dental clinics in several European capitals. He died in 1932.

GEORGE EASTMAN, a merchant cargo ship, was built under contract let by the Maritime Administration to the Permanente Metals Corporation. She was launched 20 April 1943, under the sponsorship of Mrs. Ann Troutman, being delivered to the Maritime Administration on 5 May 1943 for operations as a cargo ship under charter to the Pacific Atlantic Steamship Company until 24 June 1948 when she was placed in the Maritime Reserve Fleet at Suisun Bay, California. Taken out of reserve on 24 December 1951, she served under charter to the Pacific Far East Lines until (2 June 1952) when she was turned over to the custody of the Navy Department at Suisun Bay and designated USS ~~GEORGE EASTMAN~~ (YAG-39).

~~GEORGE EASTMAN~~ (YAG-39) was fitted out with many scientific instruments and nuclear detection and measurement devices to enable her to explore fall out areas for a great number of purposes including the measurement of radioactive fields, the sampling of fall out collections, and the testing and perfection of especially designed washdown systems that would give maximum benefits in decontamination studies for protection of ships in event of nuclear war. She was also fitted out with electronic remote control gear, that enabled her to operate as a "robot ship" from a distance of a hundred miles, being controlled automatically from a

USS GEORGE EASTMAN

helicopter or other aircraft, or from another ship or craft. Her remote-control system enables her to be operated as a fully-manned ship by a crew of 8-15 men from her number three hold where an especially designed cubicle houses her control center. Completely sealed in the cubicle by 13 feet of sea water and other shielding, the crew can take GEORGE EASTMAN into fields of dense atomic fall out, aided from their control center by television circuits connected with television cameras which scan the horizon and surface a full 360 degrees from strategic placements about the ship, including one in the top of her main mast. So effective is the remote control system that she can be brought alongside a pier with her crew in the sealed cubicle. Her remarkable remote-control system enables her to steam as a fully-manned ship in maneuvers and steering. Her instruments and experimental systems can also be activated automatically through or from a remote ship or aircraft.

GEORGE EASTMAN was placed "In Service" in the Twelfth Naval District at San Francisco on 20 October and assigned to Joint Task Force 7. Her first duties took her to Eniwetok Atoll in the Marshall Islands for operations in the surrounding Pacific Proving Grounds during March through May 1954. In these waters, she gathered data and carried out experimental ship protection and other tests during the nuclear underwater test "Operation Castle." After return to San Francisco, she again served with Joint Task Force 7 during the deep underwater nuclear test "Operation Wigwam" which was carried out during May 1955 in an open ocean area several hundred miles southeast of San Diego, California. Various tests were conducted in the following fourteen months as she cruised out of San Francisco as far as Hawaii.

GEORGE EASTMAN departed Pearl Harbor on 1 April 1956 and reached Eniwetok Atoll seven days later for tests, experiments and the gathering of scientific data in the nuclear proving tests "Cherokee" and "Funa" during May - June 1956, followed by identical duty in the "Mohawk" and "Tewa" atomic test shots in July. This service terminated on 28 July 1956 when GEORGE EASTMAN departed Eniwetok Atoll enroute via Pearl Harbor for the San Francisco Naval Shipyard.

GEORGE EASTMAN reached San Francisco from Hawaii on 16 August 1956. Alterations upkeep, and additional scientific instrumentation was completed by 6 February 1957. With base at San Francisco, she then joined in a series of full-scale tests for advanced weapons and ship protection systems conducted for the Bureau of Ships in open-ocean areas along the California coast. She was towed from San Francisco by the fleet tug CAHOKIA (ATA-186), and arrived in San Diego on 21 October for inactivation. She was placed out of service on 1 November 1957 and assigned to the San Diego Group, U. S. Pacific Reserve Fleet.

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Enclosure (1) - (History of USS GEORGE EASTMAN - Continuation of)

GEORGE EASTMAN was refitted and reactivated under the direction of Commander Pacific Reserve Fleet and Industrial Manager, TWELFTH Naval District. GEORGE EASTMAN was commissioned on 20 October 1962 at the Triple "A" Machine Shop to serve the Navy in advanced fields of ship protection systems and scientific warfare as directed by the Department of Defense. During refitting the ship was extensively modified to provide full messing and berthing facilities for an increased crew, as planned operations would be away from close shore support. After underway trials she stood out of San Francisco Bay on 15 November with a task unit which entered Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on the 24th of November. She then held shakedown and refresher training to prepare her for a test series. Alterations, upkeep, and additional scientific instrumentation were completed in February 1963 at the U. S. Naval Shipyard, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

GEORGE EASTMAN's first assignment was as target ship for a test series which were held off the Island of Oahu, Hawaii. These tests gathered important scientific data for subsequent operations and were completed in May 1963. Due to results of this series, extensive modifications were made in GEORGE EASTMAN's protective systems and special aeration and circulation trials were held in all spaces in the ship. After checks to prove out modifications were accomplished, GEORGE EASTMAN commenced training to prepare her for an extensive test series, which commenced in February 1964 and was completed in September 1964. Since that time, several voyages in the mid-Pacific in support of national science research programs have been made.

Still operating in the waters of the Hawaiian Sea Frontier, GEORGE EASTMAN is assigned to Commander Service Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Commander Service Squadron FIVE, and operates under the operational control of the Hawaiian Sea Frontier in Department of Defense scientific research projects.

LIST OF OFFICERS-IN-CHARGE

Lieutenant Commander Hugh W. Anglin, USN:	20 Oct 1953-	Jun 1954
Lieutenant A. D. Hunt, USNR:	Jun 1954-	Oct 1954
	9 Nov 1954-	28 Feb 1955
Chief Machinist O. N. Krogstad, USN:	Oct 1954-	9 Nov 1954
	28 Feb 1955-	28 Mar 1955
Lieutenant Commander Ross Pennington, USN:	28 Mar 1955-	1 Nov 1957

LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS

Lieutenant Commander William G. STERNBERG, USN:	20 Oct 1962-	30 Jan 1965
Lieutenant Commander John H. CHURCH, USN:	30 Jan 1965-	

Enclosure (1)

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STATISTICS

LENGTH OVERALL:	442 feet
EXTREME BEAM:	57 feet
FULL LOAD DISPLACEMENT	
Tons:	11,600
Maximum Navigational Drafts	30 feet
DESIGNED SPEED:	
Knots:	10
COMPLEMENT:	
Merchant Service:	
Officers:	4
Enlisted:	45
ALLOWANCE:	
Naval Service:	
Officers:	7
Enlisted:	93
Experimental Skeleton Crew	4 officers, and 30 men

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HISTORY OF USS GEORGE EASTMAN (YAG39)

GEORGE EASTMAN was acquired by the Navy from the Maritime Commission in October 1953 and used in the extra continental defense projects of the Department of the Defense.

From 20 October 1953 until 1 November 1957 Eastman was operated as "in service" not commissioned. In November 1957 Eastman was placed in the reserve fleet at San Diego, California.

During 1962 Eastman was towed to San Francisco, California for activation and commissioned on 21 October 1962 and assigned to the operational and administrative control of Commander Service Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

The primary mission of USS GEORGE EASTMAN is carrying out test in the intra-continental defense projects of the Department of the Defense, carried out under the guidance of the Deseret Test Center, Fort Douglas, Utah. While actively engaged in these test operational control is under Commander Hawaiian Sea Frontier.

LIST OF OFFICER-IN-CHARGE

Lieutenant Commander Hugh W. ANGLIN, USN:	20 OCT 1953	JUN 1954
Lieutenant A. D. HUNT, USNR:	JUN 1954 -	OCT 1954
	09 NOV 1954	-28 FEB 1955
Chief Machinist O. N. KROGSTAD, USN:	OCT 1954	-09 NOV 1954
	28 FEB 1955	-28 MAR 1955
Lieutenant Commander Ross PENNINGTON, USN:	28 MAR 1955	-01 NOV 1957

LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICER

Lieutenant Commander William G. STERNBERG, USN:	21 OCT 1962
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STATISTICS

LENGTH OVERALL:	442 Feet
EXTREME BEAM:	57 Feet
FULL LOAD DISPLACEMENT:	
Tons:	11,600
Maximum Navigational Draft:	28 Feet
DESIGNED SPEED:	
Knots:	10
COMPLEMENT:	
Officers:	7
Enlisted:	108
Experimental Skeleton Crew:	8-15 Officers and Men