

## USCGC Mellon 717

The MELLON, one of the largest and finest cutters in the Coast Guard, is the third of a new class of High Endurance Cutters. The MELLON is named for Andrew W. MELLON, Secretary of the Treasury from 1921 to 1932. MELLON was commissioned in 1968 at Avondale Shipyards, Inc. of New Orleans, LA.

The MELLON incorporates some unique and novel features allowing her to perform several Coast Guard missions. Driven by two Pratt and Whitney gas turbines similar to those installed in large jet airplanes and delivering 36,000 shaft horsepower, the MELLON can attain speeds in excess of 29 knots. When driven by two diesel engines, she can cruise for 14,000 miles without refueling. This dual capability enables the MELLON to engage in law enforcement patrols for weeks on end or in case of a Search and Rescue mission, to get quickly to the scene of distress to render aid. The MELLON's two 13 foot propellers are variable pitched, allowing them to reverse directions without stopping the shafts to back the ship. This gives the MELLON acceleration and deceleration capabilities unusual for a vessel her size. A retractable bow propulsion unit provides thrust to direct the bow in any direction and gives the ship the capability of actually moving sideways in the water.

The MELLON carries two 76 foot motor surf boats launched and retrieved by high speed hydraulic boat handling equipment. The 80 foot flight deck is capable of landing, servicing, fueling and carrying Coast Guard and Navy jet powered helicopters, used for aerial surveillance, transporting personnel and cargo between otherwise inaccessible locations, search and rescue and other missions.

In addition to her mission of Safety of Life at sea, the MELLON plays a primary role in the enforcement of U. S. laws and international treaties concerned with the protection of U. S. fishing rights and the interests of the American fishermen. The MELLON spends close to six months each year embarked upon Alaska Fisheries Patrols cruising the North Pacific from the Gulf of Alaska along the Aleutian Chain to the Bering Sea as far north as St. Lawrence Island, within 180 miles of the Soviet Union. MELLON's extensive electronics equipment permits high speed communications as well as helping maintain a watchful eye over foreign fishing activity. Modern meteorological and oceanographic equipment aboard the MELLON provide up-to-date weather information and other data in man's continuing quest to learn about the oceans. MELLON is deployed on her various assigned missions about 200 days each year, and covers over fifty thousand miles in support of those missions annually.

MELLON was the first of her class to become part of the Coast Guard's Pacific Fleet. She is currently homeported in Seattle, Washington.