

**USCGC  
EASTWIND  
WAGB-279**



*In the calm Caribbean*

The Coast Guard Cutter Eastwind was commissioned in San Pedro, California on June 3, 1944. The 269-foot icebreaker, destined for nearly 20 Polar expeditions completed her shakedown cruise on July 14, 1944. A month later, she reached her home port of Boston, Massachusetts.

Her first mission in WW II was to Northeast Greenland. There she fought through 10-foot thick ice to rescue two men in a small boat, lost from an allied patrol.

Pushing still further Northward, she sighted a German weather station on October 1, 1944. During the next 15 days, landing parties from the Eastwind captured the station, its valuable documents, and a German expeditionary vessel. The rest of the war was spent working in thick polar ice and ferreting out various enemy infiltrations.

At the war's end, the icebreaker made four peacetime trips to Greenland. In 1948 she smashed a shipping path in New York's icebound Hudson River, alleviating serious supply shortages in upstate communities.

From 1950 to 1954, the cutter made numerous and varied trips to the Northern and Arctic regions. Then in 1955, participation in the first Operation Deepfreeze. Since then, she has divided her time between Arctic and Antarctic operations.

On Nov. 3, 1960, the Coast Guard Icebreaker Eastwind prepared to chase the setting sun across the Pacific after transiting the Panama Canal enroute Antarctica to participate in Operation Deepfreeze 61. The next port of call for the glistening white 269-foot cutter would be Christchurch, New Zealand, jumping off spot for the icy wastes of McMurdo sound.

A search for a downed jet pilot, the saving of a life at sea, and a midnight buzzing by a plane though at first to be a Cuban bomber, highlighted the Eastwind's voyage to Panama.

Two days out of Boston, the ship, which carries two helicopters, was directed to assume on scene command of a search force consisting of 12 aircraft and 4 other ships in an attempt to locate a downed Air Force F-84 jet pilot, lost on a flight from Bermuda. The search was called off after it was ascertained that the pilot probably had not been able to bail out.