



### GLACIER'S History and Mission

Deep Freeze 81 marks GLACIER's 26th year of operations in Polar waters. GLACIER's construction began in August, 1953 at Ingalls' Shipbuilding Company in warm Pascagoula, Mississippi and she was commissioned in May 1955 as the USS GLACIER (AGB-4), after Glacier Bay, Alaska. Built as one of a kind, the 310' 21,000 hp GLACIER was designed to penetrate polar ice regions never before accessible to ships. GLACIER has a cruising range of 25,000 miles, more than the circumference of the earth.

GLACIER was homeported in Boston, Massachusetts while a Navy icebreaker and participated in the first Operation Deep Freeze in connection with the International Geophysical Year 1955-1956. During that deployment, GLACIER discovered the largest iceberg yet recorded. GLACIER continued her annual deployments to the Antarctic through 1966 when she was transferred to the Coast Guard with all other Navy icebreakers. She was moved to her present homeport at Long Beach, California, her Navy grey hull was repainted white, and her big guns were removed and scientific oceanographic equipment was installed which emphasized her primary mission- the support of polar science. USCGC GLACIER, (now WAGB-4) continued to participate in Operation Deep Freeze through 1970 when her string of 15 consecutive Antarctic deployments was broken by assignment to Arctic operations. While on one of those Northern deployments, GLACIER made a goodwill visit to the Soviet merchant port of Nak-

hodka on the Sea of Japan, to become the first U.S. Coast Guard vessel to visit a Soviet Port since World War II.

GLACIER's assigned tasks include: channel cutting with close support of supply ships, logistic support for remote station, ocean science projects, and search and rescue in the polar regions. Special facilities include chemical, biological, geological, hydrographic, aerological, and photographic laboratories, and a computer data processing center for scientific information.

To operate the GLACIER there are 14 officers and 185 enlisted. This year the GLACIER became the first U.S. icebreaker to have female crewmembers aboard, consisting of 2 officers and 18 enlisted. While on polar deployment the GLACIER adds a 14 man aviation detachment from the USCG Polar Operation Center in Mobile, Alabama to fly the two H-52A helicopters assigned to the GLACIER for Operation Deep Freeze.

In 1972 GLACIER got her present red hull color and picked up the nickname: "BIG RED". She carries the Antarctic and Arctic Service Medals, 2 Navy Meritorious Unit Commendations, and the National Defense Medal. Over these 26 years GLACIER has served admirably with distinction in the performance of these responsibilities and likely will be found for years to come heading for North of South with her dependable motto: "FOLLOW ME!".