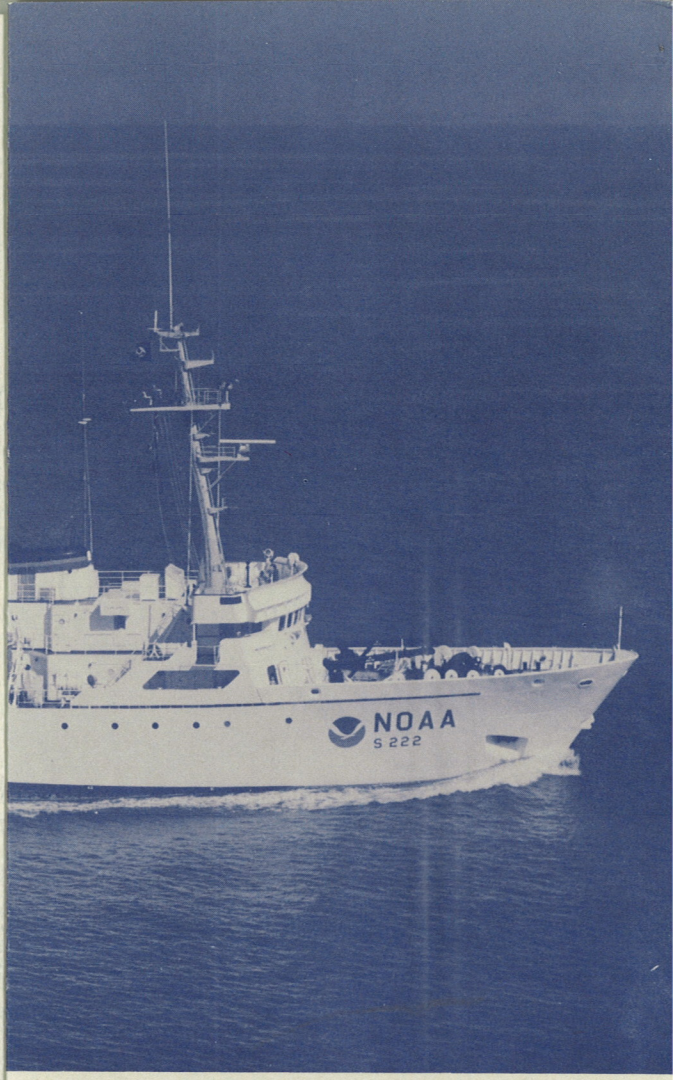
WELCOME ABOARD

MT MITCHELL

$222



MT MITCHELL is one of 25 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) ships supporting programs in oceanography, fisheries research, nautical charting, and ocean mapping. The ship is specially equipped to conduct precise ocean mapping surveys and capable of performing both nautical charting and oceanographic tasks. From her home port in Norfolk, Virginia, MT MITCHELL is available for deployment anywhere along the East Coast, Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, and beyond.

Like her sister ships RAINIER and FAIRWEATHER on the West Coast, the ship is named for a prominent geographic feature. Mount Mitchell, located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, is the highest peak in the eastern United States. The mountain itself was named for Dr. Elisha Mitchell of the University of North Carolina who, in 1835, determined its elevation to be 6,684 feet.

Commissioned in 1968, the ship was built by Jacksonville Shipyard Inc., in Jacksonville, Florida, as a dedicated hydrographic survey vessel. After 20 years of distinguished service in support of NOAA's nautical charting program, MT MITCHELL underwent a major refit in 1987 to prepare for her new principal

mission, surveying the nation's Exclusive Economic Zone.

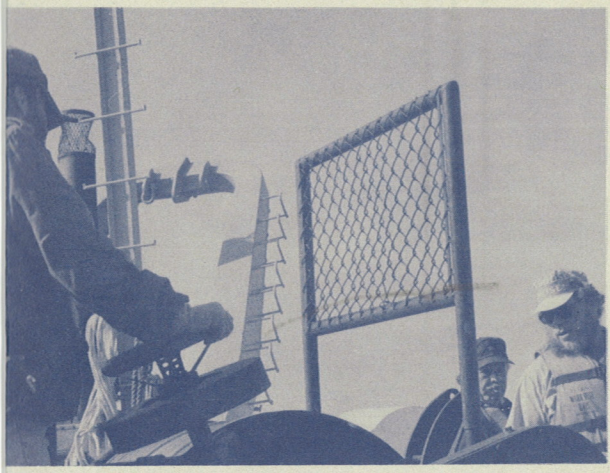
Over the years MT MITCHELL has conducted surveys in areas ranging from the Great Lakes to Puerto Rico to Southeast Alaska. Although intended to work in waters contiguous to the United States she has sailed to Spain, France, and Venezuela, and conducted surveys off Honduras.

To prepare for her new mission, the ship was outfitted with a state-of-the-art swath sounding system called Seabeam. This system produces a strip contour map of the sea floor over which the ship passes. The width of each strip is equal to approximately three quarters the water depth. Successive adjacent strips

Lowering a Con
stern of the MT
instrument pack
oceanographers

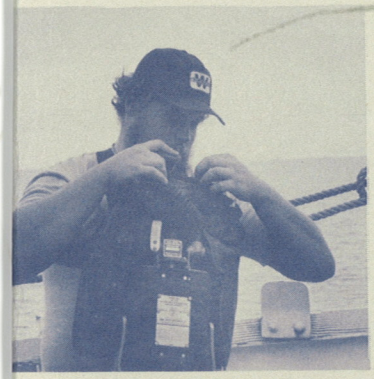
combine to yield a precise contour map of the ocean floor of unprecedented accuracy and detail. A satellite navigation system and a medium range land based electronic navigation system provide position information to the survey system.

President Reagan's 1983 proclamation of a 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone added approximately 3 million square miles to the economic jurisdiction of the U.S. NOAA, in cooperation with the U.S. Geological Survey, undertook the task of mapping this vast area. Work was begun along the West and Alaskan Coasts in 1984. MT MITCHELL is the first NOAA ship engaged in EEZ mapping of the East and Gulf Coasts. Early efforts will be concentrated in the western Gulf of Mexico in depths greater than 1000 meters.



ctivity, Temperature and Depth cast over the TCHELL (left and above) requires teamwork. The e provides valuable information for udying our global seas.

"Fixing" the ship's position at sea is a time-honored part of the bridge routine.



A fire drill on the MT MITCHELL sees a crew member checking his oxygen breathing apparatus.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Builder	Jacksonville Shipyard Inc. Jacksonville, Florida
Commissioned	March 23, 1968
Call Letters	WTEG
Home Port	Norfolk, Virginia
Length	231 feet (70.3 meters)
Beam	42 feet (12.8 meters)
Draft	14 feet (4.27 meters)
Displacement	1798 tons
Horsepower	2400 BHP
Propulsion	Diesel twin screw controllable pitch propellers; 200 HP bow thruster
Cruising speed	13 knots
Range	8,000 nautical miles
Complement	10 Commissioned Officers 44 Crew

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Ocean Service
NOAA/PA 85011

MT MITCHELL S222

A Message from the Captain

The officiers and crew of NOAA Ship MT MITCHELL welcome you aboard. This ship is our home, our workplace, and our pride. We are happv to have the opportunity to share it with you.

MT MITCHELL is operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. She is equipped with the most advanced ocean mapping system available and is dedicated to the task of surveying the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone.

I hope you find your visit both enjoyable and enlightening.

Sincerely,

Commanding Officer
NOAA SHIP MT MITCHELL S222