

USS *Laertes* (AR-20)

USS *Laertes* (AR-20) was a Xanthus class repair ship in the service of the United States Navy from 1945 to 1972.

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Construction and commissioning

Laertes was originally laid down as the Liberty ship *SS Dutiful* by Bethlehem-Fairfield Shipyard on 7 August 1944. She was launched on 14 September 1944, sponsored by Mrs. F. A. R. McNab, and acquired by the Navy on 28 September. She was converted into a repair ship by the Maryland Drydock Company of Baltimore, Maryland and commissioned as *USS Laertes* (AR-20) on 24 March 1945, Commander Leslie H. Hawkins in command.

World War II service

Sailing to Norfolk on 31 March, *Laertes* underwent shakedown before departing on 6 May for the Pacific. Arriving at Pearl Harbor on 6 June, she proceeded on 19 June to Eniwetok, where for almost 4 months she repaired ships damaged during the final battles of the war. In October, she steamed to Okinawa, then sailed for the west coast on 8 November, arriving at Bremerton, Washington on 1 December. She served as a preinactivation repair ship until 17 April 1946 when she steamed to San



USS *Laertes* (AR-20)

History



United States

Name	<i>Laertes</i>
Namesake	<u>Laertes</u>
Builder	<u>Bethlehem-Fairfield Shipyard</u>
Laid down	7 August 1944
Launched	14 September 1944
Acquired	28 September 1944
Commissioned	24 March 1945
Fate	Sold for scrap on 7 July 1972

General characteristics

Displacement	5,801 tons
Length	441 feet 6 inches
Beam	56 feet 11 inches
Draft	22 feet
Propulsion	reciprocating steam engine, single shaft, 2,500 shp
Speed	12.5 <u>knots</u>
Complement	525
Armament	one <u>5"/38 caliber gun</u> <div>three <u>3"/50 caliber guns</u><div>four <u>40 mm guns</u></div></div>

Diego for similar duty. *Laertes* decommissioned on 15 January 1947 and entered the Pacific Reserve Fleet.

twelve 20 mm guns

Korean War service

Laertes recommissioned on 19 December 1951 at San Diego, Capt. Beth A. Shepard in command. She operated out of San Diego as a unit of Service Force, Pacific Fleet, until 7 June 1952, when she deployed to the Far East. Steaming via Pearl Harbor, she reached Sasebo, Japan on 10 July for operations with Service Squadron 3. She served in the Far East for more than 5 months, servicing ships of the United States Seventh Fleet at Sasebo and at Pusan, Korea, and steaming off the coasts of Japan and Korea.

Departing Sasebo on 3 January 1953, she sailed for San Diego, arriving on 27 January. *Laertes* deployed to Pearl Harbor from 10 March to 6 June, then steamed to Long Beach, California on 8 July. She returned to San Diego on 1 December.



Laertes (AR-20) at Sasebo, Japan with nine minesweepers and a harbor tug alongside, on 8 October 1952.

Decommissioning and disposal

Laertes decommissioned on 26 February 1954, and entered the San Diego Group, Pacific Reserve Fleet. In August 1961 she joined the Maritime Administration Reserve Fleet at Suisun Bay. She was sold to Zidell Explorations, Inc. on 7 July 1972 for scrapping.^[1]

Awards

Laertes received two battle stars for service during the Korean War.

See also

- World War II
- Korean War

References

This article incorporates text from the public domain Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships. The entry can be found here (<https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/l/laertes.html>).

1. Maritime Administration Ship Record
Detail: *Laertes* (<https://pmars.marad.dot.gov/detail.asp?Ship=2923>)

External links

- [Photo gallery \(http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh-l/ar20.htm\)](http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh-l/ar20.htm) at Naval Historical Center
 - [Photo gallery \(http://www.navsource.org/archives/09/25/2520.htm\)](http://www.navsource.org/archives/09/25/2520.htm) at Navsource.org
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