

# AGOR 14 MELVILLE – 1969 to 2014



# A Rich History of Service

MELVILLE (AGOR14) was named in honor of Rear Admiral George W. Melville (1841-1912), a noted Arctic explorer and Chief of the Bureau of Steam Engineering from 1887 to 1903. She is the second Navy ship named in Admiral Melville's honor. The first was a destroyer tender USS MELVILLE which operated from March 1913 to August 1946 during both world wars.

MELVILLE was built at Defoe Shipbuilding Company in Bay City Michigan. Her keel was laid on 12 July 1967 and she was launched 10 July 1968. Melville was sponsored and christened by Mrs. Elford A. Cederberg the wife of Congressman Elford A. Cederberg.

MELVILLE was delivered to Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego 1 August 1969. MELVILLE is 279' LOA with a 46' beam and 16' -6" draft. MELVILLE was originally 246' but during her mid-life refit from 1989-1992 she was cut in half and lengthen 33'. Her original cycloidal propulsion was replaced with twin Z-drive main propellers and a retractable Z-drive bow thruster.

# Many adventures.....

In her 45-year career at SIO, MELVILLE has steamed more than 2.8 million miles in operations that have spanned the globe from the Arctic to Antarctic and every ocean in between pushing the frontiers of knowledge and our understanding of the Earth and its complex processes.

MELVILLE is the oldest operating research ship in the University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System (UNOLS) academic research fleet giving her the honorary title of "The Ancient Albatross". She received this designation in 2006 when the University of Alaska, Fairbanks R/V Alpha Helix retired.

MELVILLE has sailed on more than 50 major expeditions launched from MELVILLE's home port of San Diego; some expeditions lasting more than three years before returning to home port. Her busy career started shortly after delivery when she completed eight globe-spanning expeditions comprising 49 individual cruises from 1970-1975.



# Career highlights.....

1976 - appeared as the PETROX EXPLORER in Paramount Picture's movie *King Kong: The Legend Reborn* starring Jeff Bridges and Jessica Lange.

March 1983 - sustained damage from severe tropical cyclone REWA north of French Polynesia (BENTHIC Expedition)

March 1986 - sailed into caldera of Deception Island, Antarctica (ICE Expedition)

September/October 1987 - delivered supplies to descendants of HMS BOUNTY on Pitcairn Island.

On site at Macdonald Seamount (approx. 850 miles SE of Tahiti) during volcanic eruption (HELIOS Expedition)

March 1996 - chance encounter with and re-supply of French archaeological team on Ile St. Paul in the Indian Ocean (BOOMERANG Expedition)

April/May 1999 - located the Japanese carrier Kaga destroyed in the Battle of Midway (AVON Expedition)

# Hail Melville!

September 2001 - chased by natives in canoes off of Papua New Guinea for apparently infringing on their fishing grounds (COOK Expedition)

November 2006 - first observation and sampling of an active submarine deep-sea volcanic eruption (Submarine Ring of Fire Expedition).

Participation in various search and rescue operations over the years including search for a lost sailboat off Cape Horn in December 2002 (VANCOUVER Expedition)

Participated in various ONR sponsored expeditions including Littoral Warfare Advanced Development (LWAD) in which she was the 1st non-combatant to tow SURTASS, Surveillance Towed Array Sensor System.

Launched and recovered aerial drones used for Earth magnetic field measurements.

# Thank you for your service

