

USS *Yosemite* (AD-19), *Dixie*-class destroyer tender

Displacement:	14,037 tons	Armament:	Four 5-inch/38-caliber guns
Length:	530 feet, 6 inches		Eight 40-mm guns
Beam:	73 feet, 4 inches		Twenty-three 20-mm guns
Draft:	25 feet, 6 inches	Complement:	1,076 officers and men
Speed:	19.6 knots (trial)		

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The Yosemite in the Measure 32/3ax camouflage—5-L light gray, 5-O ocean gray, and dull black—in which she went to war. The portside design differed from that employed on the starboard.



and sheet-metal shops. The second deck housed an even larger machine shop and an electrical shop. The third deck contained the torpedo shop.

The Mighty Y—now referred to by her crew as “The Busy Lady”—accompanied the Pacific Fleet to Japan after hostilities ceased, providing services at Sasebo and Yokosuka. Returning then to the States, she became flagship for commander, Destroyer Force, Atlantic Fleet, at Portland, Maine, on 17 June 1946. Six months later she moved to Newport, Rhode Island; that remained her home port until October 1969, when she steamed to Mayport, Florida, to take up duties there. Her voyages took her from Oslo, Norway, to Portsmouth, England; Athens, Greece; and Naples, Italy.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, the *Yosemite* provided services for destroyers at Kingston, Jamaica. Many years after that dangerous confrontation, she also played a small part in establishing the groundwork for what President George H. W. Bush called “a better U.S.-Soviet relationship . . . an instrument of positive change for the world”—the end of the Cold War. On 3 December 1989, upon the conclusion of summit talks at Malta between Bush and Soviet Chairman Mikhail Gorbachev, the President thanked the captain and crew of the guided-missile cruiser *Belknap* (CG-26) for their “great support.”

The *Belknap*'s commanding officer in turn praised the *Yosemite*'s “superb support under often difficult short-fuse conditions”

as the cruiser and her men had prepared for the presidential visit. The tender's captain, Harlan R. Bankert Jr. (who had enlisted three months before the Cuban crisis began), noted that his ship's carpenter shop, print shop, and sail loft had “played a helpful role in the successful completion of the presidential summit.” Certainly, the *Belknap*'s commanding officer contended, “we could not have accomplished what had to be done without *Yosemite*'s help. That you did it all with a positive, can-do approach is the hallmark of a great tender.”

Cancellation of the *Yosemite*'s July 1993 deployment saddened Lieutenant Michael A. Boslet, her chief engineer, who considered his tour in the venerable tender the biggest challenge of his career. “It would have been nice to deploy one last time,” Boslet lamented, “I think she has some miles left in her.”

The *Yosemite* was decommissioned on 27 January 1994 at Naval Station Mayport, and her “Don't Tread on Me” jack—flown by the oldest ship in continuous commission—consequently was transferred to the repair ship *Jason* (AR-8). Stricken from the Naval Vessel Register on the same day, *The Busy Lady* met her end nearly a decade later, on 18 November 2003, as she served the Fleet for one final time—a target in a Fleet training exercise.

Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, who had flown his flag in the *Yosemite* as commander, Destroyers, Atlantic Fleet, shortly before he became Chief of Naval Operations, fondly remembered her as “not one of the grand dames of the fleet, but [one that could] repair wounds, care for their crews, and fix their ailments. Without her,” he maintained with a certainty that reflected his experience as a destroyerman, “[the ships of the Fleet] could not have done their duty. She was a true Battle Fleet tender!”



NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND

The Yosemite provides services for the guided-missile destroyer Tattnell (DDG-19) and guided-missile cruiser Dale (CG-19) as they lie alongside, ca. 1989. By coincidence the cruiser, destroyer, and tender share the same hull number.