

Great Ships of The U. S. Navy

U.S.S. Robert K. Huntington

[I happened to run across this cover and liked the art work so much that I thought I'd dig up the ship's story...and a respectable story it is, too!]

The Robert K. Huntington (DD-781) was laid down 29 February 1944 by Seattle Tacoma Ship Building Corp., Seattle, WA, and commissioned 3 March 1945, Comdr. J. W. Ramey in command.

She joined the Pacific Fleet just before the war ended and was one of the ships which escorted the USS Missouri into Tokyo Bay to receive the official Japanese surrender. In the spring of 1946, she was at Marshalls for the first atomic bomb test at Bikini. In July, she witnessed the air burst from a considerable distance, and the more spectacular underwater blast from the comparatively close range of 10 miles.

For the next 10 years, Bouncing Bobbie K saw service in Hawaiian and Far Eastern waters, the Arctic, the Caribbean, and the Mediterranean! In July of 1955, she was in the North Atlantic guarding President Eisenhower's plane route as he traveled to and from the Geneva Conference.

Following a Caribbean cruise in the spring of 1956 Huntington conducted a midshipman training cruise to Europe and the Caribbean. In 1957 she operated in the Caribbean and then in European waters for NATO exercises. In both 1958 and 1959, Huntington made 6-month Mediterranean deployments, while she spent most of 1960 undergoing a fleet rehabilitation and modernization overhaul and conversion. Emerging from the shipyard, the "new" destroyer steamed to her new home port, Mayport, and through 1961 operated off the U.S. east coast and in the Caribbean.

Continuing her 'worldwide' deployment, Huntington deployed to the Mediterranean 3 August, and operated in the Black Sea 3 to 12 October. She returned to Mayport 3 March 1963 and spent much of the rest of that year in the Caribbean. For the next 4 years she operated off the east coast, in the Caribbean, and in the Mediterranean. In late 1967, she deployed to the Mediterranean as part of a hunter-killer force. She returned to Mayport 16 December 1967.

In October 1968, she deployed to the Far East for 6 months operating off Vietnam. She returned to Mayport 17 April 1969 and operated in the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf of Mexico into 1970.



In July 1970, Huntington received a new assignment and a new home port. Operating out of Bayonne, N.J. she was active in the Atlantic and Caribbean with the Reserve program. As a result of a survey in October 1973., she was found to be unfit for further service and was decommissioned 31 October at Newport, R.I. Huntington was stricken from the Navy List on the same day and sold to the Venezuelan Navy. The Robert K. Huntington earned two battle stars for Vietnam service.

