



# THE HISTORY OF THE

## USS SURIBACHI AE-21



**Louis P. Deasaro**  
Commanding Officer

The keel of the USS SURIBACHI (AE 21) was laid in January 1955 at Bethlehem Steel Shipyard, Sparrows Point, Maryland. The ship was commissioned in November 1956 as the prototype of a new class of ammunition ship designed by the U.S. Navy. The ship's name is taken from Mount Suribachi, the extinct volcano over which the United States Marines raised the American Flag during the battle of Iwo Jima in 1945. SURIBACHI's mission is to serve as a link between the production and storage of ammunition ashore and its use by combatant ships on the high seas. Since commissioning, SURIBACHI has operated in the Atlantic, Caribbean, Mediterranean and Indian Ocean with the SECOND, SIXTH and SEVENTH fleets. SURIBACHI recently supported U.S. Naval Forces in Lebanon, Grenada and the North Arabian Sea. During the conflict in Vietnam, SURIBACHI operated in support of U.S. combat activities in Southeast Asia. She has an overall length of 512 feet, with a beam of 72 feet. Her maximum draft is 31 feet and fully loaded she displaces approximately 17,500 tons. Her single screw is driven by geared steam turbines, with steam supplied by two distillate fuel burning water tube boilers equipped with automatic combustion control. Her maximum speed is 20 knots, with a maximum sustained speed of 18.8 knots. There are 19 Officers, 21 Chief Petty Officers and 293 Enlisted. The USS SURIBACHI was also the first ammunition ship to answer the call of the nation, in support of Operation Desert Shield. SURIBACHI's crew is very dedicated and proudly boasts that their ship is "First in her class, best in her class."



**Andrew J. Koch**  
Executive Officer