

Icebreaker Southwind Returns From Arctic

By Jon Franklin 10/70

After smashing her way farther north into the Arctic ice pack than any other icebreaker, USCG Southwind came home to Baltimore yesterday.

The ship moored at the Coast Guard yard's pier one, her ice-crushing bow scraped clean of paint near the water line and showing a fine sheen of rust.

During her five-month mission, Southwind penetrated the northern ice to within 419 miles of the pole.

She also paid a port call to Murmansk, the first United

States Naval vessel to enter that northern Russian city since it was the terminus of the dangerous Murmansk run in the early part of World War II.

Closest To Pole

Capt. Edward D. Cassidy, Southwind's skipper, said that August 15 the ship penetrated the Arctic ice pack to a latitude of 83 degrees, 1 minute north, the closest any surface vessel under power has approached the pole.

He said exploration surface

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vessels, approached much closer to the pole, but not under power. Unable to penetrate the thick ice, those ships were deliberately jammed in the ice and allowed to drift with the pack.

Once trapped by the ice, they had to remain until freed by natural forces—one ship was trapped for three years.

North Of Siberia

Captain Cassidy said Southwind's northernmost penetration occurred at a point, north of Siberia and to the east of the barren Franz-Joseph Islands.

"We could have gone farther," he said, but added that a deeper penetration would not have added anything to the ship's scientific assignment.

At the time the ship was carrying a team of scientists from the University of Alaska.

The researchers were taking water samples at various depths in an investigation of the mixing of cold Arctic Basin water with the comparatively warmer water of the North Atlantic.

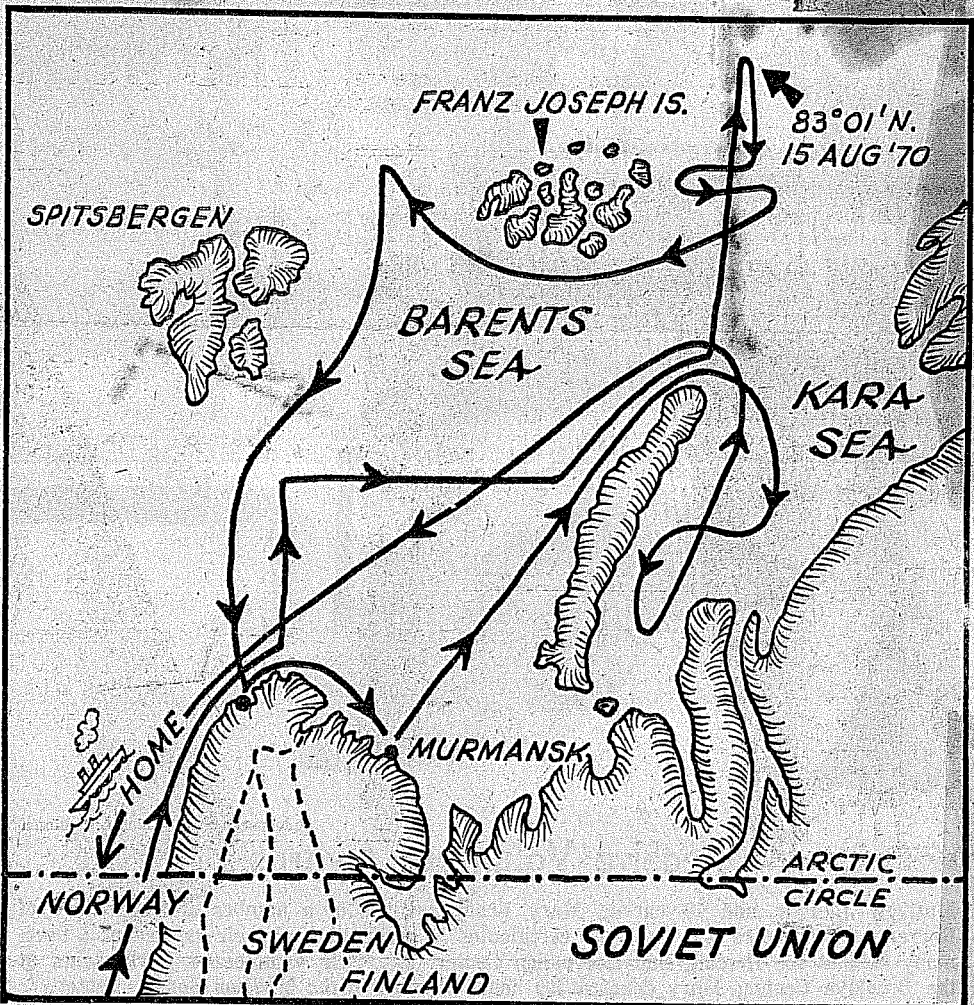
That intermixture is suspected of playing a part in meteorological processes.

Once Under Russ Flag

Captain Cassidy said he asked that Murmansk be made a port of call because "we had to stop somewhere" and because the Southwind had once sailed under the Russian flag.

That was between 1945 and 1950 when, under the provisions of the lend-lease program, she sailed as the Admiral Makarov.

Murmansk, the world's largest city north of the Arctic Circle, is Russia's major northern port. During World War II massive aid was funneled into Rus-



MISSION NORTH—Line traces the route followed by Southwind during the eastern segment of its Arctic cruise. On the way home, the ship operated for a time in Baffin Bay.

sia through that port by convoys out of England.

Sailors assigned to the Murmansk run braved submarines on the southern leg of the route and bitter cold on the northern leg.

While in the Russian port, Southwind

wreaths at a Soviet military cemetery and at a cemetery for allied soldiers and sailors.

During the cruise the ship also paid a visit to Copenhagen,

broke the year's first sea channel to Thule, Greenland, and helped search for survivors from a Russian aircraft that was lost en route to Peru.