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USS PINCKNEY (DDG 91)

Honoring a U.S. Navy Hero



William Pinckney's Service

- William Pinckney was born in Dale, SC on April 27, 1915, and entered the Navy Aug. 3, 1938.
- Rising to the rank of Navy Cook 1st Class, Pinckney served on USS Enterprise (CV 6), when the carrier was hit twice by Japanese bombs during the Battle of Santa Cruz Islands on Oct. 26, 1942.
- When an explosion killed four of the six men at his battle station in an ammunition handling room, Pinckney and the other surviving Sailor attempted to exit through a hatch to the hangar deck above. When the other man fell back unconscious, Pinckney carried the Sailor to safety despite the suffocating smoke, flames, and gasoline fumes surrounding him.
- For his selfless actions onboard USS Enterprise (CV 6), Pinckney was awarded the Navy Cross and the Purple Heart.
- Pinckney was one of four African Americans to receive the Navy Cross in World War II.
- Pinckney passed away July 21, 1976, and is buried at Beaufort National Cemetery.

DDG 91 Quick Facts:

Name: USS Pinckney (DDG 91)

Class: Arleigh Burke-class

Length: 509.5 feet

Speed: 30+ knots

Crew: 329 total

Mission: Guided-missile destroyers are multi-mission surface combatants capable of conducting Anti-Air Warfare (AAW), Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), and Anti-Surface Warfare (ASUW). The destroyer's armament has greatly expanded the role of the ship in strike warfare utilizing the MK-41 Vertical Launching System (VLS).



The Ship's Crest

A crest is used to identify a ship or command and its elements usually symbolize the ship's namesake. For USS Pinckney (DDG 91), the elements represent the heroic service of Navy Cook 3rd Class William Pinckney and the features of the Arleigh Burke-class.

- The Gules (Scarlet) denotes courage and sacrifice. The black grille shaped like an Aegis shield refers to the Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) class, to which Pinckney belongs, and their state of the art equipment and armament. It also suggests a mess grill, symbolizing the duties of William Pinckney as a Navy Cook 3rd Class aboard the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CV 6) at the time he heroically saved a shipmate's life on Oct. 26, 1942. The trident symbolizes authority and seagoing power.
- The eagle's head denotes American vigilance and strength.
- The Navy Cross indicates the award for heroism made to Pinckney for his exemplary actions under fire in saving the life of a fellow Sailor during the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands.
- The compass-rose signifies navigational expertise and global action during World War II.
- The wreath of laurel represents honor and achievement. Gold indicates excellence.



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