

TRANSPORT - WATER

The Icebreaker Lenin Lives On

At the museum of the Murmansk Maritime Steamship Line a separate display is devoted to it. Visitors are particularly interested in the history of the icebreaker "Lenin", which was responsible for a glorious chapter in the heroic story of the defence of the Soviet Arctic during the last war.

"The twin-stacked steam-powered icebreaker bearing Lenin's name had a splendid ten-year career in the Arctic," relates V. Beletskii, head of the steamship line. "The war found it in dock at the port of Murmansk, where it was undergoing major repairs. On the second day a fascist plane swooped down upon it but did not attack. The people of Murmansk understood why. The Nazis hoped to use the icebreaker to carry out operations in northern waters. The fascists were convinced that the city would not hold out even two months. But having been halted at the approaches to Murmansk in September 1941, they were unable to penetrate further for the duration of hostilities in the North.

The crew of the "Lenin" did much to assist the heroic defenders of the Arctic. On leaving the dock, the ship began accompanying transport ships loaded with war cargo. It operated year-round on Arctic routes, and nearly every voyage was a test of the sailors' courage and determination, and not only in the struggle with the treacherous ice of the Arctic. The Nazis set out to hunt the icebreaker down. Once, when the "Lenin" was escorting ten transport ships loaded with military equipment and supplies through the ice, it was attacked by a large group of enemy aircraft.