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U.S.S. ENTERPRISE
NCC-1701-C

AMBASSADOR
LAUNCHED: 2332
LENGTH: 520 METERS
TOP SPEED: WARP 8.4
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U.S.S. ENTERPRISE NCC-1701-C
SPECIFICATION

REGISTRY: NCC-1701-C
CLASS: AMBASSADOR
CONSTRUCTED: EARTH STATION MCKINLEY
LAUNCHED: 2332
DESTROYED: 2344 (NARENDRA III)
LENGTH: 520 METERS
DECKS: 36
TOP SPEED: 8.4
WEAPONRY: TYPE-7 PHASERS
CAPTAIN: RACHEL GARRETT
The U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-C was an Ambassador-class starship that was operational in the early part of the 24th century. She became famous after she was lost with all hands in 2344 defending the Klingon outpost on Narendra III from a Romulan attack. This act of heroism impressed the Klingon Empire and was instrumental in the forging of a treaty between the Klingons and the Federation.

The Enterprise-C was constructed at Earth Station McKinley during the 2320s and was commissioned in 2332. She was given the name Enterprise after the Enterprise-B was declared lost in 2329 and was the fourth Federation starship to bear the name. Six months before she was launched she was placed under the command of the then 33-year-old Captain Rachel Garrett, who had previously served as the first officer on the U.S.S. Hood. Garrett was the Enterprise-C’s first and only commanding officer.

The Enterprise-C was the third Ambassador class ship built by Starfleet. Other ships in the class included the U.S.S. Adelphi NCC-26849, the U.S.S. Zhukov NCC-26136 and the U.S.S. Excalibur NCC-26517. Measuring 526 meters from bow to stern, she was about twice the length of the Constitution-class Enterprise NCC-1701. With 36 decks and a crew of 530, she was one of the largest ships that Starfleet had built to date.

In terms of design, the Ambassador class was a clear mid-point between the Constitution and Galaxy classes. The engines benefited from a number of advances in warp technology, which came about during Starfleet’s unsuccessful
When the Enterprise-C was lost during the battle, but what no-one realized was that before she was destroyed, she was thrown through a temporal rift that sent her 22 years into an alternate future, where her heroic sacrifice had not been recorded. As a result, in this altered timeline, the Federation and the Klingons were at war. The crew made a choice to return to certain death in their own time, in the hope their sacrifice would earn a better future.

Following the loss of the Enterprise-C, it was another 20 years before a new Enterprise in the form of the Galaxy-class U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-D was commissioned.

In the altered version of the timeline, Tasha Yar was still alive, but when she realized that this was “wrong”, she volunteered to return with the crew of the Enterprise-C in the hope of balancing out the timeline. Without her sacrifice, the Federation was losing the war with the Klingons. Her ships were soldiers not explorers.

Captain Rachel Garrett was commanding the Enterprise-C. She took command in late 2332, when she was promoted months after a well-regarded tour as the first officer of the U.S.S. Hood. She spent the first six months of her command supervising the final testing of her new ship, before it was commissioned and assigned to an ongoing mission of deep space exploration.

She died in an alternate future, when the Enterprise-C was propelled back in time 22 years and attacked by Klingons. Before her death she had decided to return to certain death in her own time, hoping that her crew’s sacrifice would help to avert a war.
Advances in warp field technology meant that the nacelles on the Ambassador class were in a lower position relative to the saucer section than on earlier starship vessels.

When the Enterprise-C returned to her own time, her systems had been repaired but only to the standards of her own time. She did, however, have the advantage of Tasha Yar’s tactical experience.

Although primarily designed for exploration, Ambassador-class ships fought in the Dominion War and helped establish the barricade that restricted Romulan involvement in the Klingon Civil War.

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The design process for the Enterprise-C started more than two years before the finished ship appeared on screen. While Andrew Probert was designing the Enterprise-D, he’d found himself thinking about the lineage of the ship. One of the things that had struck him was the differences between Kirk’s Enterprise and Picard’s Galaxy-class vessel. He wondered about the look of the ship or ships that must have come in between and how much their design must have influenced the look of the D.

Probert agreed with the producers and production designer Herman Zimmerman that the Enterprise-B had been an Excelsior-class vessel but the C was a complete unknown. He reasoned that it was likely it would probably have had a number of design elements in common with the classes that came before and after it.

“I wanted there to be evidence that the “C” had grown from the Excelsior and then that the D had grown from the C,” he explains. “So what I did was take a side profile of the Excelsior and then take a side profile of a Galaxy class ship. I then put them in the same scale one above the other and simply drew lines from one to the other at various important points, whether it was the saucer, the impulse engines, the bridge, the engineering hull, whatever. By doing that I eventually came up with a composite which became the Enterprise-C.”

This design formed the basis of the model of the C that appeared on the wall in the D’s conference room. But that model only showed the side view and Probert left the show before he could explore his ideas further. When Yesterday’s Enterprise called for us to actually see the Enterprise-C considerably more work was needed.

Designer Rick Sternbach, who took over from Probert, had seen the sketch but had initially assumed it was a left over design for the Enterprise-D which had been considered by the producers but ultimately rejected. It wasn’t until he was handed the script for Yesterday’s Enterprise that he looked at it in any detail. As he recalls, his own initial thoughts on the way that the ship should look were remarkably similar to Probert’s vision. “I’d always thought it
Sternbach wanted to be confident that the Enterprise-C could be built quickly and easily, so he gave the engineering hull a circular cross-section, which he hoped would be easier to build in the available time.

was a given that the logical step for this design was an intermediate step between the Excelsior class and the Galaxy class. That little sketch that Andy produced when he’d worked on the first season looked like it would be a really great starting point, as it definitely had some very interesting design elements. I remember that my first thoughts were that the nacelles on Andy’s design could be a bit different and that while his sketch showed more of a round saucer than an Excelsior-class ship, it also had a very Excelsior-looking neck.”

Sternbach felt that Probert’s sketch simply wasn’t detailed enough to catch the attention of producers and, as it only showed a three quarter view of the ship, it meant that many aspects of the design left too much open to interpretation. What was needed was a set of drawings, which gave the shapes Probert had come up with and his overall idea far more clarity.

FILLING IN THE DETAILS

“I took some of the ideas and some of the design elements of Andy’s that were in the sketch, and threw up a top view and a side in ortho,” says Sternbach. “I showed those to the producers and at the same time made the case that this would be an intermediate step between the Constitution and Galaxy classes and could very well be the Ambassador class that they were looking for.”

While waiting to get the thumbs up from the producers, Sternbach continued modifying the design, mainly to make it easier to work with. Probert had made no secret of the fact that he favoured compound curves and this was reflected in his decision to give his version of the ship a very bowed engineering hull reminiscent of a sailing ship. However it was those very compound curves that Sternbach felt would ultimately make the ship difficult to build, especially in the available time.

SOMETHING YOU CAN BUILD

“Greg just really knows his stuff,” says Sternbach. “He could be given freehand drawings and he’d still come back with a workable model. So I knew I didn’t have to draw in everything. Greg would immediately understand the shapes and the details. It was the reason that he was able to create such a wonderful blend of the Galaxy class and Excelsior class that both myself and Andy Probert had originally envisioned for the Enterprise-C.”

The final profile view that Sternbach sent over to modelmaker Greg Jein, pulled the design a little closer to Kirk’s Enterprise and a little further away from Picard’s.
The Making of

Yesterday’s Enterprise

One of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION’s greatest episodes had a long and complicated genesis that involved many changes.

Yesterday’s Enterprise is a fan’s dream: one of TNG’s most popular episodes, which brought a beloved character back from the dead, introduced us to a new Enterprise and started as a story dreamt up by two fans. For TNG’s regular writing staff it was a nightmare that somehow turned into one of the show’s best installments.

It all started with Michael Piller. When he took charge of the writing staff in 1989, things were a mess. A succession of professional writers had found it hard to get their heads around what Roddenberry wanted, the ratings were soft, and there were hardly any scripts in development. So Piller decided to look outside the box. He started by going through the pile of unsolicited scripts and opened up the submissions process to non-professionals.

One of the spec scripts that caught his eye was called “Yesterday’s Enterprise,” its central premise had the Enterprise encountering a ship from the “last generation,” which had travelled ahead in time. In the ‘proper version of history’ the ship had been destroyed with the loss of all hands during an incident that had led to peace between the Klingons and the Federation. That original spec script was written by Christopher Trent Ganino, a friend of TNG’s script coordinator, Eric Stillwell.

As Stillwell explains, it was very different to the finished episode, “It didn’t involve an altered timeline and didn’t have Tasha Yar or Guinan in it. It was a simple morality tale about a ship from the past turning up in Picard’s time and Picard knowing that he must return them to the past before they can alter the timeline. The longer they stay in Picard’s time, the more chance their absence from the past might alter history.”

BACK FROM THE DEAD

This moral dilemma was exactly what appealed to Piller. In a memo to Rick Berman he posed the question of how one deals with the moral issues of sending people we get to know and like back to their certain deaths.

Piller had also been looking for a way to work Tasha Yar into an episode. Like many fans he had been unhappy with the way she died. “I think there was a great appeal to the idea of giving her a worthy death,” he mused. It struck him that a script which involved altering the timeline could be a way to bring her back. By a happy coincidence, Ganino and Stillwell had also been talking about an idea that featured Tasha, so Piller asked them to work together to combine the two stories.

One of the things Piller instructed them to do was change Ganino’s Captain Richard Garrett into a woman. The now renamed Captain Rachel Garrett would later be replaced by Tasha Yar who would sacrifice her own ‘future’ by opting to return with the Enterprise-C.

However this revised story presented Piller with a bit of a problem. “In those days Rick Berman hated time travel stories. In fact, when I first arrived to work on the series he shook my hand and said ‘No time travel stories.’ But as soon as I thought about seeing Tasha Yar on the bridge I knew that it was a great story. She’s got to realize that ‘I don’t belong here and I have to give up my life to save everyone else.’ I remember very distinctly, I called Rick and said, ‘All right, I know you don’t like time travel stories but think of this – an old Enterprise goes through a time shift, and when it comes through Tasha Yar is still alive at the security station. He just looked at me and said, ‘Sold.’”

Piller had made it clear that he wanted Guinan, who had a number of unspecified abilities, to be heavily featured in the episode, but Ganino and
it encounters Picard’s
Enterprise-C falls through a rift in time caused by its battle with the Romulans.
It arrives in an unfamiliar

BEHIND THE SCENES

everyone else aboard were very different to the militaristic feel to the entire place. Picard and
the Enterprise-D was very little difference between the

Moore. “I didn’t just want it to be a bit different

Moore felt the version handed to him lacked any

Filming had originally been scheduled to begin in January, but news came through that Denise Crosby and Whoopi Goldberg would only be available in December so filming was rescheduled, leaving the writing staff with just days to produce a workable script. It fell to Piller’s unofficial deputy Ira Behr to find a way to make that happen.

As Moore readily admits, the somewhat disjointed approach together with the complexities of the plot, not to mention the altered timeline, made the process anything but smooth. “When we broke the story we kept confusing each other and getting really frustrated,” he recalls. “We kept going into each other’s offices and saying, ‘What does Guinan know?’ ‘What are you doing in your act?’ ‘But wait a minute that doesn’t make sense...’

However they plowed on and by Monday Piller was presented with the first draft of the script. According to Moore the writing staff were less than convinced they’d managed to do the story justice. “At the time we were dazed, angry and irritable. We didn’t like the script and we thought that it was

In the story, the Enterprise-C falls through a rift in time caused by its battle with the Romulans. The production team made alterations to the costumes and the sets, but more importantly, the writers welcomed the chance to give the characters a harder edge that made for a more dramatic story.

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Looking back, Moore now understands just why it is that yesterday’s Enterprise has not only stood the test of time but continues to be so popular.

"Time travel is always a great concept; it always gets people interested and the parallel universe is just as fascinating. It has that ‘what if?’ – path not taken by the characters – elements just waiting to be explored. In the episode we get to see these perfect people suddenly be not so perfect and we realise that, given a different set of circumstances we could all be very different people. Added to that was the fact that the episode has this epic grandeur not to mention enormously high stakes, love, sacrifice and a perfect ending."

A DESPERATE PLAN

Moore was given the teaser and Acts One and Five, Behr handled Act Two, while Hans Beimler and Richard Manning tackled Acts Three and Four. As Moore readily admits, the somewhat disjointed approach together with the complexities of the plot, not to mention the altered timeline, made the process anything but smooth. "When we broke the story we kept confusing each other and getting really frustrated," he recalls. "We kept going into each other’s offices and saying, ‘What does Guinan know?’ ‘What are you doing in your act?’ ‘But wait a minute that doesn’t make sense...’"

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ON SCREEN

KLINGON NEGH’VAR

TRIVIA
Work on the computer graphics for the bridge of the Enterprise-C began before the final design of the ship was signed off.
As a result, the profile view follows the outline seen in the Enterprise-D conference lounge rather than Rick Sternbach’s finished design.
Christopher Trent Ganino named Captain Garrett after a pizzeria in his home town of San Diego.

The story that Stillwell and Ganino developed that involved Tasha Yar relied heavily on elements from the original series.
In it, Spock’s father Sarek is visiting the Guardian of Forever, when an accident results in the death of Surak, the father of Vulcan logic. This alters the timeline, bringing Tasha back to life but creating an alternate history where the Vulcans are warlike people.

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Features

- Featured TV Series: STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
- First Appearance: Yesterday’s Enterprise
- Movie Appearances: None
- Other Appearances: None
- Designed By: Rick Sternbach, Andrew Probert

Key Appearances

‘Yesterday’s Enterprise’
The crew of the Enterprise-D are on their way to Archer IV when they encounter a wormhole in space-time. Suddenly, without realizing it, reality changes and history is rewritten as the Enterprise-C passes through the wormhole. In this new reality the Enterprise-D is a warship fighting a losing battle with the Klingon Empire. Picard and his crew try their best to help the crew of the badly damaged Enterprise-C, but Guinan warns Picard that something is seriously wrong and that somehow the past has been altered. History records that the Enterprise-C vanished without a trace, but her captain, Rachel Garrett, reveals that they fell through the temporal rift while trying to defend a Klingon outpost from a Romulan attack. Picard realizes that if the Klingons had known about the Enterprise-C’s sacrifice 22 years ago, it could have changed everything, but if he sends Garrett and her crew back in time, there is no question that they will be killed in a matter of minutes...