



USS STERETT (CG-31)
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

CG31/WFF:cc
5750
Ser **003**

JAN 07 1980

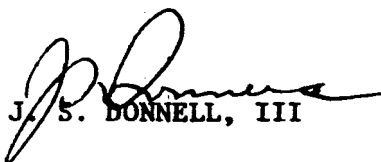
From: Commanding Officer, USS STERETT (CG-31)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)


Subj: OPNAV Report 5750-1; forwarding of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Command History (OPNAV report 5750-1; USS STERETT (CG-31)
1 January - 31 December 1978)

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded in accordance with reference (a).


J. S. DONNELL, III

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Director of Naval History
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1978

COMMAND HISTORY

USS STERETT (CG-31)

1 January - 31 December 1978

OPNAV Report 5750-1

COMMANDING OFFICERS

USS STERETT (CG-31)

**CAPTAIN CHARLES GORDON FARNHAM, USN
(ASSUMED COMMAND 9 OCTOBER 1975)**

AND

**CAPTAIN JOSEPH STOVER DONNELL, III, USN
(ASSUMED COMMAND 3 FEBRUARY 1978)**

PART I

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
1-25 JAN	INPORT SAN DIEGO, HOLIDAY LEAVE AND UPKEEP PERIOD AND INTERMEDIATE MAINTENANCE ACTIVITY (IMA) AVAILABILITY.
18 JAN	TYPE COMMANDER BOILER INSPECTION
26 JAN	UNDERWAY FROM NAVAL STATION (NAVSTA) SAN DIEGO FOR NAVAL WEAPONS STATION SEAL BEACH.
23-27 JAN	ENGINEERING SCHOOL SHIP
27 JAN	MOOR SEAL BEACH. COMMENCED WEAPONS HANDLING. UNDERWAY SEAL BEACH PM 27 JAN. INVESTIGATED UNUSUAL SHIPPING OFF THE COAST OF PT MUGU.
28 JAN	MOOR NAVSTA SAN DIEGO. COMMENCE PLANNED RESTRICTED AVAILABILITY (PRAV).
23 JAN-10 FEB	FOOD MANAGEMENT ASSIST VISIT.
25 JAN	COMMENCE NTDS LOW COST LINK EVALUATIONS.
30 JAN	PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE SYSTEM (PMS) RE-INSPECTION OF THE DAMAGE CONTROL WORK CENTER (ER09).
1 FEB	CHANGE OF COMMAND REHEARSAL. CMS AUDIT
3 FEB	CHANGE OF COMMAND. CAPTAIN CHARLES GORDON FARNHAM, USN IS RELIEVED BY CAPTAIN JOSEPH STOVER DONNELL, III, USN.
6 FEB	EMBARKED COMMANDER CRUISER DESTROYER GROUP III (COMCRUDESGRU III), RADM WILLIAM H. ROWDEN.
13 FEB	DEBARKED (COMCRUDESGRU III).
14 FEB	SHIP'S PARTY AT NAVAL TRAINING CENTER CPO CLUB, SAN DIEGO.
23 FEB	COMBAT SYSTEMS PMS CHECK.
28 FEB	DEPUTY COMMANDER OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS AND ENGINEERING, RADM CARTER, EMBARKS FOR A COMBAT SYSTEMS SHIPCHECK.
8-14 MAR	WEAPONS ONLOAD PIERSIDE NAVSTA SAN DIEGO.
15 MAR	REFRESHER TRAINING CONFERENCE AT ASW BASE. COMMENCE REFTRA PREPARATIONS.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
27 MAR	SHIP CONDUCTS A "FAST CRUISE".
30 MAR	UNDERWAY FROM NAVSTA SAN DIEGO FOR SEA TRIALS. COMPLETE PRAV.
31 MAR	MOOR NAVSTA 32ND STREET. COMMENCE REFRESHER TRAINING PREPARATIONS.
3-21 APR	SHIP UNDERGOES "S" AVAILABILITY (SHIP TO SHOP).
3 APR	HABITABILITY SYMPOSIUM TOUR ONBOARD.
7 APR	COMCRUDESGRU III EMBARKS.
11 APR	COMCRUDESGRU III DEBARKS.
17 APR	UNDERWAY FOR PORT VISIT, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.
20 APR	BURIAL AT SEA FOR CLYDE W. MINNEAR, CDR, USN (RET) AND MERRILL P. THOMAS, EMC, USN (RET).
21 APR	MOOR SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.
24 APR	UNDERWAY FROM SAN FRANCISCO.
27 APR	MOOR NAVSTA SAN DIEGO.
28 APR	UNDERWAY FOR ONE DAY DEPENDENTS DAY CRUISE, MOOR NAVSTA SAN DIEGO PM 28 APRIL.
9 MAY	TRAINING AND READINESS EVALUATION (TRE).
10 MAY	WEAPONS ONLOAD NAVSTA SAN DIEGO.
12 MAY	EMBARK RESERVISTS FOR SUMMER TRAINING.
17 MAY	ANNUAL OFFICERS VS. CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS SOFTBALL GAME.
22 MAY	"STERETT NIGHT" AT SAN DIEGO STADIUM.
25 MAY	LIGHT ANTI-SUBMARINE HELICOPTER SQUADRON 35, DETACHMENT ONE (HSL 35 DET 1) EMBARKS.
27 MAY	EMBARK MIDSHIPMEN FOR SUMMER TRAINING.
30 MAY	UNDERWAY FOR READY EXERCISE (READIEX) 3-78. WEAPONS ONLOAD AT LA PALAYA PIER.
1 JUNE	ANCHOR CORONADO ROADS FOR READIEX 3-78 PREPARATIONS.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
2 JUNE	UNDERWAY FROM CORONADO ROADS FOR COMBAT SYSTEMS EXERCISE 2-78. EMBARK COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON SEVEN (COMDESRON SEVEN), CAPTAIN J. HOGO.
6 JUNE	LIVE MISSILE FIRING. DEBARK COMDESRON SEVEN.
8 JUNE	EMBARK COMMANDER NAVAL SURFACE FORCES PACIFIC, VADM WILLIAM ST. GEORGE. COMMENCE UPRIVER CRUISE OF COLUMBIA RIVER. PRESS CONFERENCE HELD ON THE FORECASTLE BY VADM ST. GEORGE. MOOR PORTLAND, OREGON. COMNAVSURFPAC DEBARKS. "EVENING SHOW" BROADCAST LIVE FROM STERETT.
9-12 JUNE	PARTICIPATE IN PORTLAND ROSE FESTIVAL. EMBARK COMCRUDESGRU III.
13 JUNE	UNDERWAY FOR SAN DIEGO. EMBARK 120 GUESTS AND FRIENDS FOR COLUMBIA DOWN RIVER CRUISE. VISITORS DEBARK AT ASTORIA, OREGON WHILE STERETT CONTINUES ON TO PARTICIPATE IN THE REMAINING ANTI-SUBMARINE PORTION OF READIEX 3-78.
17 JUNE	DEBARK COMCRUDESGRU III. DEBARK RESERVISTS.
23 JUNE	DEBARK MIDSHIPMEN.
10 JULY	COMMENCE PRE-OVERHAUL TESTS AND INSPECTION.
15 JULY	SHIP'S PICNIC AT ADMIRAL BAKER FIELD, SAN DIEGO.
19 JULY	WEAPONS INSPECTION COMMENCES.
21 JULY	HMS BLAKE (C-99) ARRIVES SAN DIEGO. STERETT ACTS AS HOST SHIP UNTIL 17 AUGUST. WEAPONS INSPECTION COMPLETED.
26 JULY	UNDERWAY SOCIAL FOR NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT (NGFS) EXERCISES.
28 JULY	MOOR NAVSTA SAN DIEGO.
29 JULY	UNDERWAY FOR SEATTLE, WASHINGTON. STERETT PARTICIPATED IN A SECRETARY ON THE NAVY GUEST CRUISE (9 GUESTS EMBARKED).
31 JULY	TRANSIT THE STRAITS OF JUAN DE FUCA ENROUTE SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.
2 AUG	MOOR MANCHESTER FUEL PIER OUTBOARD USS GRAY. EMBARK NAVY SHOW BAND AND SEATTLE VISITORS. UNDERWAY AT 1100 TO PARTICIPATE IN THE AT SEA PARADE OF SEATTLE HARBOR. MOOR SEATTLE.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
2-7 AUG	SHIP PARTICIPATES IN THE SEATTLE SEAFAIR.
3 AUG	RADIO STATION "KIRO" BROADCASTS THE WAYNE CODY SPORTSLINE LIVE FROM THE FLIGHT DECK OF THE STERETT.
7 AUG	EMBARK SECRETARY OF THE NAVY GUESTS FOR RETURN TRIP TO SAN DIEGO. GUESTS FROM SEATTLE ALSO EMBARK FOR THE FIRST PART OF THE JOURNEY TO PORT LOS ANGELES. SHIP UNDERWAY FROM SEATTLE AT 1330. ARRIVE PORT ANGELES AT 1700, DEBARK GUESTS FROM SEATTLE AND PROCEED OUT THE STRAITS OF JUAN DE FUCA TO SEA.
22 AUG	DEBARK MIDSHIPMEN.
1 SEPT	COMMENCE PRE-OVERSEAS MOVEMENT (POM).
7-8 SEPT	WEAPONS TECHNICAL INSPECTION CONDUCTED ONBOARD.
14 SEPT	POSTAL ASSIST VISIT. TORPEDO ONLOAD.
15 SEPT	WEAPONS ONLOAD PIERSIDE.
18 SEPT	AVIATION READINESS EVALUATION.
19 SEPT	HARPOON WEAPONS EXCHANGE PIERSIDE.
21 SEPT	HSL 35, DET 1 EMBARKS FOR UPCOMING DEPLOYMENT. SHIP GETS UNDERWAY FOR SEA TRIALS.
22 SEPT	MOOR NAVSTA SAN DIEGO.
23 SEPT	RADM ROWDEN, COMCRUDESGRU THREE BREAKS HIS FLAG IN STERETT FOR UPCOMING DEPLOYMENT.
25 SEPT	PRESAIL CONFERENCE FOR UPCOMING TRANSITEX 13-78.
26 SEPT	UNDERWAY FOR WESTERN PACIFIC/INDIAN OCEAN DEPLOYMENT. COMMENCE TRANSIT EXERCISE (TRANSITEX).
2-3 OCT	PLANE GUARD FOR THE USS CONSTELLATION.
5 OCT	ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WAR AT SEA EXERCISE WITH LIVE MISSILE AND TORPEDO FIRINGS AT BARKING SANDS ORDNANCE RANGE.
6 OCT	MOOR PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII.
9 OCT	STERETT OFFICIERS AND MEN RECIEVE VARIOUS PRE-DEPLOYMENT BRIEFS FOR UPCOMING OPERATIONS IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC AND INDIAN OCEAN FROM

DATE:

EVENT

THE STAFF OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE PACIFIC FLEET.

10 OCT UNDERWAY FROM PEARL HARBOR. THE SHIP PARTICIPATES IN TACTICAL READINESS EXERCISES WITH THE AUSTRALIAN DDG'S PERTH AND HOBART.

11 OCT SN MARVIN BURKHART IS LOST AT SEA.

12 OCT MEMORIAL SERVICES HELD ABOARD FOR SN BURKHART.

14 OCT THIS DAY LOST AS THE STERETT CROSSES THE INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE.

19 OCT COMPLETE TRANSITEX 13-78.

20 OCT CONDUCTED RADIATED NOISE LEVEL TESTS OFF THE COAST OF GUAM.

22 OCT THE FIRST "NAVTAG" COMPETITION IS HELD IN THE STERETT WARDROOM BETWEEN OWN SHIP'S OFFICERS AND THE OFFICERS OF THE COMCRUDESGRU THREE STAFF.

23 OCT ENTER THE SAN BERNADINO STRAITS.

24 OCT MOOR NAVSTA SUBIC BAY, REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES.

26 OCT UNDERWAY FROM SUBIC BAY FOR STORM EVASION OF TYPHOON RITA.

28 OCT MOOR NAVSTA SUBIC BAY.

4 NOV TASK GROUP 75.1 (TG 75.1) BON VOYAGE PICNIC HELD AT GRANDE ISLAND.

8 NOV PQS ASSIST VISIT.

10 NOV AFTER UNLOADING WEAPONS AT CAMAYAN PIER THE STERETT GETS UNDERWAY AND COMMENCES JOURNEY TO KARACHI, PAKISTAN. OPERATION MIDLINK 1978 PREPARATIONS ARE ONGOING.

23 NOV ANCHOR KARACHI, PAKISTAN.

24-25 NOV INPORT DRILLS AND EXERCISES CONDUCTED WITH OTHER CENTO NAVAL UNITS TO PREPARE FOR OPERATION MIDLINK 1978. TWO PAKISTANI UDT DIVERS ARE LOST DURING AN ANTI-SHIP SWIMMER EXERCISE CALLED "OPERATION AWKARD".

26 NOV UNDERWAY FOR OPERATION MIDLINK 1978.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
27-28 NOV	MIDLINK AT SEA GUNNERY EXERCISES AND SEAMANSHIP EXERCISES CONDUCTED.
29 NOV	FORMATION ANCHORAGE AT CHURNA ISLAND.
30 NOV	SORTIE FROM CHURNA ISLAND.
4 DEC	COMPLETED OPERATION MIDLINK. EMBARKED 14 DISTINGUISHED DIGNATARIES FROM THE CENTO NATIONS FOR A ONE DAY FIREPOWER DEMONSTRATION. AFTER DEMONSTRATION IS COMPLETED THE GUESTS WERE DEBARKED AND THE SHIP ANCHORED OFF THE COAST OF KARACHI, PAKISTAN.
7 DEC	UNDERWAY FOR A POSITION OFF THE COAST OF IRAN IN THE GULF OF OMAN.
9 DEC	ARRIVE ON STATION OFF THE COAST OF IRAN. STANDING BY THE CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.
13 DEC	TOWING EXERCISE WITH THE USS WADDELL (DDG-24).
18-19 DEC	STERETT ADMINISTERED A COMMAND INSPECTION BY COMCRUDESGRU III.
24 DEC	CHRISTMAS EVE. NESTED WITH USS BRADLEY (FF-1041) AND USS WADDELL (DDG-24). FIRST ARABIAN SEA DAYS MOTORWHALE BOAT RACES CONDUCTED.
31 DEC	UNDERWAY AS BEFORE. ON STATION OFF THE COAST OF IRAN PREPARING FOR CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.

PART II

NARRATIVE HISTORY

The year of 1978 got off to a lackluster start for the Guided Missile Cruiser USS STERETT (CG-31). New Years Day found the ship moored at the Naval Station, 32nd Street, in San Diego, California undergoing routine upkeep and maintenance. Ship's company spent their days performing the housekeeping chores that all ships demand to ensure combat readiness. Training was also emphasized during this inport period, and all hands took advantage of the opportunity to bone-up on professional topics.

STERETT remained inport until the end of January when she sailed to Seal Beach to transfer weapons. The actual onload and offload were carried off without incident and the ship took in all lines on schedule. However, proceeding out of the channel orders from the Commander of the THIRD Fleet set the tempo of our operations into high gear. Unusual shipping had been reported in the area of target vessels anchored off the coast of the Naval Air Station at Point Mugu. STERETT proceeded north at flank speed to investigate and inspect the target ships. There was no evidence of tampering and STERETT returned to San Diego the next day.

On 28 January the STERETT began an unusually long maintenance availability that was to last through the end of March. Long hours were spent by officers and men improving the overall material condition of the ship. A myriad of gauges and electronic test equipment was calibrated, the innards of our four boilers were torn apart and replaced, the deck force chipped and painted expansive topside area, and all hands initiated planning for the scheduled overhaul the ship was slated to undergo beginning in the summer of 1979.

The daily routine changed little from the first part of the year. Training and equipment maintenance were carried out as before, but this second availability period took on an added dimension as it gave birth to a sports program that continued to grow and gain popularity as the year progressed. The spark that ignited this spirit was the STERETT softball team, more commonly referred to as the "Green Machine" from February on the team was the talk of the fleet as they went down to defeat only a handful of times. The enthusiasm generated by the Green Machine encouraged other teams to form. First basketball, then soccer, then tennis.

The month of February began with a Change of Command Ceremony for the Commanding Officer. Captain Charles Gordon FARNHAM, USN was relieved by Captain Joseph Stover DONNELL, III, USN, during ceremonies conducted on the flight deck. Another high point was the ship's party and dinner held at the Naval Training Center on the 14th.

In March the dominate evolution was preparing for refresher training (REFTRA) slotted for the end of May. Formal planning began with REFTRA conference on the 15th and continued through the 9th of May with the Training and Readiness Evaluation (TRE). Unfortunately energy directed towards passing REFTRA with high marks went for naught as engineering problems precluded the ship from getting underway.

On 3 April STERETT hosted 25 members of a Habitability Symposium being held in Coronado. This group was aboard most of the day initially receiving a briefing from the Commanding Officer and then moving on to a detailed tour of the messing and berthing spaces on the ship.

The summer months were highlighted by several festive events. First, in April, the ship sailed to San Francisco for a weekend visit. While there the red carpet was out to all who cared to come aboard.

On the return trip to San Diego the ship took advantage of an opportunity to exercise at flight quarters to train personnel not accustomed to working on a flight deck with a helicopter. The experience was beneficial for STERETT crewmen and new pilots alike.

In June STERETT was allowed to mix business with pleasure. Midway through READEX 13-78 the ship proceeded up the Columbia River to Portland, Oregon, there to play a principal role in the annual Rose Festival. Sailing into Portland was the most uplifting occurrence that the crew had experienced in several years. Hundreds of small boats escorted us in with spirited Oregonians waving and cheering as we approached our berth. A fireboat upriver was shooting streams of water high into the air as a carnival on the broadwalk rambled on. It was all very exciting. That night a television program called "THE EVENING SHOW" was broadcast live topside. Both the Commanding Officer, Captain DONNELL, and Commander Naval Surface Force, U. S. Pacific, VADM William St. GEORGE were interviewed. Shown also was footage of the Columbia upriver cruise that film crews had taken earlier in the day. Our reception to Portland, Oregon was certainly heart warming.

In August this scene was repeated to some degree as the STERETT sailed to Seattle, Washington for the "Seafair". Crewmen were able to enjoy Big Band Concerts, YMCA Disco dances, tours of the tall ship USCGS EAGLE, the King Tut exhibit, and the featured attraction of "Thunderboat" racing. The Seattle Seafair Parade saw the advent of the STERETT Marching unit representing the only entry from THIRD Fleet units. The summer of 1978 certainly smiled upon the officers and men of the STERETT and in retrospect rightfully so as the ship was but a month away from one of her most arduous extended deployments.

On September 26 Task Group 37.9 comprised of Commander Cruiser Destroyer Group THREE, USS CONSTELLATION (CG-64), Commander Destroyer Squadron SEVEN, USS HOEL (DDG-13), USS WADDELL (DDG-24), USS DECATUR (DDG-31), USS BRADLEY (FF-1041), USS KANSAS CITY (AOR-3), USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS-3), USS BARB (SSN-596) and STERETT commenced transit from San Diego (or San Francisco) to Pearl Harbor. Upon arrival in the Hawaiian Operating Areas CONSTELLATION and her escorts broke off and conducted flight operations. The remaining units participated in COMTUEX 1-79 involving AAW scenarios and live missile firings. After completion STERETT proceeded into port Pearl Harbor and moored on 6 October 1978.

The trip to Subic Bay from Pearl Harbor was not uneventful and tragedy struck as a shipmate, SN Marvin BURKHART, was lost at sea. Memorial services were conducted on the flight deck the following day. The ship arrived in Subic Bay on 24 October and departed the same day for typhoon

evasion - returning on the 26th.

Following departure from Subic Bay on 10 November for the Indian Ocean the ship continued to prepare for the large fleet exercise involving ships and planes of the CENTO Nations that would run from 23 November to 7 December near Karachi, Pakistan. Participants included the United States, Iran, England and Pakistan.

The STERETT arrived in Karachi on 12 November and immediately began an ambitious schedule of training exercises conducted in conjunction with foreign naval units at anchor. Once operation MIDLINK commenced there were a good deal of underway helicopter exercises, gunnery training, tactical maneuvering drills, communications drills, and engineering and seamanship exercises.

The exercise was marred early-on however, as two Pakistani divers were killed while carrying out an anti-ship swimmer attack while all units were at anchor in Karachi Harbor.

In early November while STERETT was enroute from Subic Bay to Karachi, Pakistan turmoil was brewing in the country of Iran. Demonstrations that began as half-hearted protests against the Shah of Iran escalated into ugly rioting on 5 November. Cinemas, liquor stores, and hotels all became targets of angry youths. As the month of November wore on, concern for welfare of Americans in Iran grew as the situation worsened and became unstable.

December found many Americans leaving the country of Iran voluntarily. Others who remained would be asked to leave later in the month. The insurrection in the country continued to mount and on December 7th, units of TG 75.1 were directed by the National Command Authority to proceed to the Gulf of Oman to await further orders.

The ships proceeded into the Arabian Sea and awaited further orders. The spirits of STERETT sailors sagged as scheduled port visits to Mombasa, Kenya; Perth, Australia, and Djakarta, Indonesia all fell by the wayside, yet all shared a deep sense of pride knowing that they were "on station" and ready to respond to any contingency. As the Christmas Holidays neared morale began to improve with the prospect of mail on Christmas Day.

As the weeks wore on all ships in company competed in weekend motor-whaleboat races, (sometimes the rules included sails), had kite flies, fantail cookouts, and numerous tournaments (chess, acey ducey, bridge, etc...) to keep themselves occupied. On board physical fitness programs were initiated and in the early evenings the "track" around the missile house forward took on the appearance of Hollywood freeway at 5:00 pm (22 laps around was a mile). Volleyball was played during cookouts on the flight deck.

On Christmas Eve USS BRADLEY and USS WADDELL moored alongside the USS STERETT for a Christmas Show that crewmen will not soon forget. Talent shows, skits, talking with friends on other ships, relaxing, were all topped off by a candlelight Ecumenical service aboard STERETT. The meaning of Christmas could not have been made any clearer to the men who served aboard STERETT that night.

The year concluded with the units of TG 75.1 continuing on station in the Indian Ocean.



USS STERETT (CG-31)
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

1979
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MAR 14 1980

From: Commanding Officer, USS STERETT (CG 31)

To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

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D. C. RICHARDSON

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