



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS CURTIS WILBUR DDG 54
FPO AF 90883-1272

5757
DDG 54
14 Jan 05

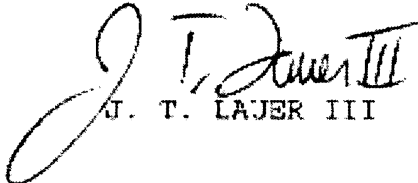
From: Commanding Officer, USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54)
To: Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 2003

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12H

Encl: (1) Command Organization
(2) Daily Chronology 2003
(3) Narrative History
(4) 2003 Commanding Officer Biography
(5) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
(6) Retention Excellence Award for FY03 050620ZJAN04
(7) Phalanx CINS Excellence SOBJ 313936ZDEC03
(8) James F. Chezek Gunnery Award 260216ZNOV03
(9) Success Steelhammer Style Press Release, 03OCT03
(10) Townsville Press Release, 06SEP03
(11) Busan Press Release, 08DEC03

1. Pursuant to reference (a), enclosures (1) through (11) comprise the 2003 calendar year history of USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG54).


J. T. LAJER III

Command Composition and Organization 2003

Name: USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG54)

UIC: 21640

Commanding Officer 2003: Abramson, A. J., CDR

Current Commanding Officer: Lauer, J. T. III, CDR

Mission: The general mission of Curtis Wilbur is to operate offensively in a high-density multi-threat environment as an integral member of a battle group or surface action group to include striking at targets along hostile shorelines and well inland. In addition, CURTIS WILBUR provides its own anti-air warfare, anti-surface warfare, and anti-submarine warfare defense and can effectively provide local area protection to underway replenishment groups, amphibious groups, and other military units. CURTIS WILBUR will provide one of the only operational employments of ballistic missile defense.

Organization: Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN

Battle Force SEVENTH Fleet

Home Port: Forward deployed to Yokosuka, Japan as part of the Forward Deployed Naval Forces.

CURTIS WILBUR Chronology 2003

| <u>MISSION</u> | <u>SEA DATES</u> | <u>DAYS UNDERWAY</u> |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Upkeep | Jan 01-Mar 10 | |
| Ammo Onload/Sea Trails | Mar 10-Mar 14 | 04 |
| CART II/CMTQ | March 2004 | |
| Upkeep | Mar 14-Apr 16 | |
| NSFS/TANDEM THRUST | Apr 17-May 14 | 28 |
| Underway Demonstration (U/D) | May 28 | 01 |
| Underway Demonstration (U/D) | Jun 03 | 01 |
| 3M Inspection | Jun 09-Jun 13 | |
| Ammo Onload | Jun 12 | |
| TSTA II | Jun 16-Jun-18 | 03 |
| TSTA III/TOWEX | Jul 28-Jul 30 | 02 |
| MISSILEX/CROCEX | Aug 18-Oct 10 | 54 |
| PACIFIC PROTECTOR | Sep 13 | |
| SHAREM 146 | Sep 27-Sep 30 | |
| KITTY HAWK PLANE GUARD | Oct 18-Oct 23 | 06 |
| ANNUALEX | Nov 01-Nov 16 | 16 |
| CSOFEX | Dec 02-Dec 15 | 14 |
| Upkeep | Dec 15-Dec 31 | |

Command History Narrative 2003

USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54) began 2003 with a thirteen week Selected Restrictive Availability (SRA) at the Naval Ship Repair Facility (SRF) in its forward-deployed homeport of Yokosuka, Japan. During the SRA the ship received major upgrades to communications, computer network, and engineering systems. The SRA totaled sixty-five million dollars in upgrades, which included five ordnance alterations, fourteen Arleigh Burke Class changes, and thirteen engineering field changes.

The 13-week SRA was a success as CURTIS WILBUR's technical and logistics experts teamed up with the capable maintenance personnel at SRF to make the yard period a resounding success. CURTIS WILBUR completed sea trials during early March.

Even before the completion of the SRA, CURTIS WILBUR was already pushing toward its basic phase qualifications as two of the twelve necessary certifications were completed during the aggressive SRA schedule. Following sea trials, CURTIS WILBUR continued with the qualifications process by completing qualifications in the Harpoon and Tomahawk weapon systems as well as a navigation certification.

In April CURTIS WILBUR left Japan for the first time in months and proceeded to the waters of the Marianas Islands to participate in Exercise TANDEM THRUST 2003. During TANDEM THRUST CURTIS WILBUR teamed up with the CARL VINSON Strike Group, Carrier Air Wing 3, the ESSEX Expeditionary Strike Group, and Destroyer Squadron NINE to provide for a successful exercise in which CURTIS WILBUR frequently played the role as the opposing force, operating against the ESSEX Expeditionary Group. Exercises also included multiple anti-submarine and anti-air warfare scenarios.

While participating in TANDEM THRUST, CURTIS WILBUR also completed naval surface fire support live fire qualification at Farallone de Medelline Island near Guam. Here CURTIS WILBUR's team scored a perfect one hundred percent, being rated as the best gun team the range had ever seen. CURTIS WILBUR's prowess with its single five-inch gun was further proved when it sank a target tugboat during the end of the exercise by placing over two-dozen rounds directly on target.

Leaving TANDEM THRUST in May, CURTIS WILBUR proceeded home to Yokosuka. In late May and early June the ship completed its engineering underway demonstration for its home squadron, Destroyer Squadron 15. June also saw the completion of two more major milestones on the basic phase certification path in several short underway periods in late June and July.

August saw CURTIS WILBUR complete the last of its basic phase qualifications as the ship prepared also for an extended underway south of the equator. The Final Evaluation Problem was completed in mid-August with CURTIS WILBUR passing with exceptional results. Shortly after, CURTIS WILBUR departed Yokosuka in late August for a multi-month underway.

First stop on the underway was the coast of Okinawa where in late August along with two of our fellow squadron ships, USS O'BRIEN (DD 975) and USS CUSHING (DD 985), CURTIS WILBUR participated in MISSILEX 2003. The exercise proved outstanding, as both target drones were destroyed by skin-to-skin hits from a pair of SM-2 surface-to-air missiles.

Following MISSILEX, CURTIS WILBUR proceeded south toward the continent of Australia along with O'BRIEN for participation in Exercise CROCODILE 2003 with the Australian Defense Forces. Along the way CURTIS WILBUR participated in a Crossing the Line ceremony for the nearly three-quarters of the ship who had never before participated in this time-honored ceremony at sea.

Prior to commencing with CROCEX CURTIS WILBUR conducted a five-day port visit in the northeast Queensland city of Townsville, Australia. Here CURTIS WILBUR Sailors enjoyed their first foreign port visit in many months and were warmly welcomed by the Australians. Activities including snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef and many MWR sponsored trips into the interior of the continent.

During CROCEX 2003 CURTIS WILBUR participated in multiple different operations with the Australian Defense Forces. Such operations included anti-air warfare exercises against the Australian Air Force and Navy, anti-submarine exercises against Australian submarines, and a full amphibious assault operation in conjunction with an escorted Australian Amphibious Ready Group. Naval gunfire exercises were also conducted jointly between CURTIS WILBUR and Australian warships, marking the first time in decades that a coordinated exercise of this magnitude had been completed.

After CROCEX CURTIS WILBUR was selected to participate in exercise PACIFIC PROTECTOR, a multi-national exercise dealing with the end of weapons proliferation across the seas. CURTIS WILBUR was the preeminent warship involved as military forces from over one dozen nations, including Australia and Japan, participated. During this exercise CURTIS WILBUR also embarked a U.S. Coast Guard boarding team to participate. Following PACIFIC PROTECTOR, CURTIS WILBUR Sailors enjoyed a second trip to Australia in a two-day port visit to Brisbane.

After the festivities CURTIS WILBUR headed north toward Okinawa again, arriving in late September to participate in the anti-submarine exercise SHAREM 146. In SHAREM CURTIS WILBUR participated in nearly one week of anti-submarine exercises against both American and Japanese submarines. CURTIS WILBUR also had the opportunity to coordinate with Japanese aircraft and surface ships. The exercise culminated in surface ship maneuvers involving nearly a dozen Japanese and American destroyers.

After SHAREM CURTIS WILBUR returned home for a brief two-week upkeep period and then returned to sea in mid-October to escort USS KITTY HAWK during her initial phase of carrier qualifications. Immediately following that underway CURTIS

WILBUR returned to sea for the first two weeks of November for SEVENTH Fleet's Annual Exercise with the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force.

During ANNUALEX CURTIS WILBUR obtained its first exposure to the realm of ballistic missile defense, conducting exercises with the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Forces. CURTIS WILBUR also conducted multiple boarding exercises with Japanese warships. The exercises culminated in an extended convoy operation where CURTIS WILBUR, along with several Japanese warships, took their convoy all the way from the west coast of Japan through the Tsugaru Straits to Yokosuka on the east coast.

With another short upkeep period in Yokosuka to include Thanksgiving, CURTIS WILBUR returned to sea in early December and headed for the Korean Coast to participate in a counter special operations force exercise. During CSOFEX 04-1 CURTIS WILBUR operated with several ships, aircraft and submarines of the Republic of Korea Navy to improve combat readiness and mutual cooperation.

The exercise included a four-day port visit to the southeastern Korean city of Busan. Following CSOFEX CURTIS WILBUR returned home to Yokosuka in mid-December to begin Christmas stand down where the ship would remain until the New Year.