



USS CURTS (FFG 38) FPO AP 96662-1493

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From: Commanding Officer, USS CURTS (FFG 38)

Director of Naval History (N09BH) To:

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization

(2) Chronology(C)

(3) Narrative(C)

(4) Biography of ADM M. E. Curts

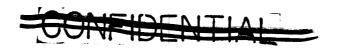
(5) Biography of CDR M. S. Frick

(6) Biography of CDR M. S. Welch

(7) PAO Article -- USS CURTS Visits Sendai, Japan

- (8) PAO Article -- Signalmen Communicate to Aussies During Replenishment At
- (9) PAO Article -- Three New Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialists Aboard USS **CURTS**
- (10) PAO Article -- USS CURTS Hosts Reception in Melbourne, Australia
- (11) PAO Article -- USS CURTS Flies High During Sea Eagle
- (12) PAO Article -- CURTS Bids Japan Sayonara and San Diego Hello
- (13) PAO Article -- Chief Damage Controlman Roy Retires Onboard USS **CURTS**
- (14) Battle Efficiency/Command Excellence Award Input
- (15) Welcome Aboard Program
- (16) Change of Command Program
- (17) Retirement Ceremony for DCC
 - Program Program
- (18) Retirement Ceremony for PC1 (19) Photographs of USS CURTS
- 1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (19) are hereby submitted as the 1997 Command History for USS CURTS (FFG 38).

M. S. Welch



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COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

- 1. <u>Command Mission</u>. USS CURTS (FFG 38) is a guided missile frigate of the Oliver Hazard Perry Class. With current upgrades, the ship is capable of battle group support in undersea warfare (USW), air warfare (AW), and surface warfare (SUW). To aid in her mission, she carries two SH-60B Anti-Submarine Helicopters, the SQS-56 Sonar/ SQR-19 Towed Array and MK 46 ship launched torpedoes. To protect against air and surface threats, CURTS is armed with the Standard Surface-to-Air Missile (SM-1) and the Otto-Melara 76 mm gun. For close-in defense, CURTS carries the Vulcan Phalanx 20 mm Close-In Weapons System (CIWS).
- 2. Organizational Structure. CURTS began 1997 as a member of the Forward Deployed Naval Force in Yokosuka, Japan, and conducted operations in support of Commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet. Commander, Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN was the immediate superior in the chain of command. In July, CURTS shifted homeport from Yokosuka, Japan to San Diego, California. In doing so, CURTS came under the jurisdiction of Commander, U.S. Third Fleet. The immediate superior in the chain of command became Commander, Destroyer Squadron ONE. In 1997, CURTS reported to the following operational commanders during the dates listed:

01 JAN 97 - 01 MAR 97 TG 075.2 02 MAR 97 - 09 JUN 97 TG 070.1 10 JUN 97 - 14 JUL 97 TG 075.2 15 JUL 97 - 31 DEC 97 TG 015.0.8



CHRONOLOGY 1997

01 JAN	HOLIDAY LEAVE CONTINUES
12 JAN	HOLIDAY LEAVE ENDS
13 JAN	TYPE TRAINING
14 JAN	TYPE TRAINING
15 JAN	DEPART YOKOSUKA, ENR SENDAI, JAPAN
16 JAN	ARR SENDAI
19 JAN	DEPART SENDAI, ENR YOKOSUKA
20 JAN	ARR YOKOSUKA
25 JAN	CHANGE OF HOMEPORT FAIR
31 JAN	SLAMEX 97-08
3 FEB	LINK 11 QUICK LOOK
4 FEB	LINK 11 LONG LOOK
15 FEB	DEPART YOKOSUKA ON SOUTHERN SWING 97 DEPLOYMENT,
	ENROUTE SASEBO, EMBARK HSL-51 (HELLFIRE 04 AND
	HELLFIRE 10)
17 FEB	ARR SASEBO
18 FEB	DEPART SASEBO, COMMENCE SHAREM 120A WITH USS FIFE,
	USS CURTIS WILBUR, JDS AMIGIRI, JDS YUUGIRI, USS TUNNY,
	JDS HAYASHIO, HSL 51 DET FOUR, SWDG, AND ENS SHIIBASHI,
ડ	JMSDF
24 FEB	FINEX SHAREM 120A, DEBARK SWDG, ENS SHIIBASHI
26 FEB	ENR GUAM FOR MISSILEX
01 MAR	MISSILEX, CIWS PACFIRE, ARR GUAM
02 MAR	FIESTA FESTIVAL, GENERAL VISITATION, 677 PEOPLE IN 4 HRS
03 MAR	PRESCHOOL VISIT, VISIT BY GUAM MAYOR, U/W ENR
	AUSTRALIAN GREAT BARRIER REEF FOR EXERCISE TANDEM
	THRUST 97
06 MAR	CROSSED THE EQUATOR AT 151-42.2E
10 MAR	COMMENCED EXERCISE TANDEM THRUST 97
22 MAR	FINEX EXERCISE TANDEM THRUST 97, ENR GLADSTONE,
	AUSTRALIA
23 MAR	ARR GLADSTONE, AUSTRALIA
25 MAR	U/W ENR SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA
26 MAR	ARR SYDNEY
27 MAR	FTSCPAC TECH REPS ARRIVE TO CONDUCT REPAIRS
01 APR	U/W ENR MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
03 APR	ARR MELBOURNE
04 APR	HOSTED RECEPTION FOR AUSTRALIAN/AMERICAN ASSOC.
	ONBOARD WITH 234 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE

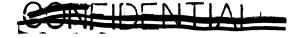
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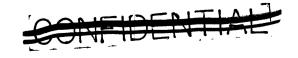


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07 APR	U/W ENR FREMANTLE, AUSTRALIA
09 APR	76MM AND CIWS PACFIRE
11 APR	SLAMEX 97-12, EMATT EXERCISE
12 APR	ARR FREMANTLE
16 APR	U/W ENR BALI, INDONESIA
21 APR	ARR BALI
24 APR	U/W ENR SURABAYA, INDONESIA
25 APR	ARR SURABAYA
29 APR	U/W ENR SINGAPORE
30 APR	76MM,CIWS PACFIRE
01 MAY	ARR SINGAPORE, SLAMEX 97-13
05 MAY	U/W ENR SATTAHIP, THAILAND
07 MAY	ARR SATTAHIP, PRE-EXERCISE RECEPTION WITH ROYAL THAI
	NAVY, 451 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE
08 MAY	U/W IN GULF OF THAILAND FOR EXERCISE SEA EAGLE 97
12 MAY	FINEX SEA EAGLE, HOTWASHUP, ANCHOR OFF PHATTAYA
	BEACH, THAILAND
17 MAY	U/W IN GULF OF THAILAND FOR EXERCISE COBRA GOLD 97
20 MAY	FINEX COBRA GOLD, ENR HONG KONG WITH ROYAL
	AUSTRALIAN NAVY
28 MAY	ARR HONG KONG (PIERSIDE KOWLOON) WITH INDEPENDENCE
	TASK GROUP
01 JUN	U/W ENR YOKOSUKA, JAPAN WITH ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY
	AND INDEPENDENCE TASK GROUP
02 JUN	VBSS TRAINING WITH USNS GUADALUPE, RETRIEVED 2
	REXTORPS DROPPED BY HS-14 FROM USS INDEPENDENCE
	(CV 62)
05 JUN	COMMENCED ASWEX 97-5JA WITH JMSDF
09 JUN	FINEX ASWEX 97-5JA
10 JUN	ARR YOKOSUKA, DEBARK HSL-51, HELLFIRE 04 AND
	HELLFIRE 10
11 JUN	COMMENCE STANDDOWN PRIOR TO CHANGE OF HOMEPORT
30 JUN	AMMO OFFLOAD
08 JUL	U/W TO ANCHORAGE FOR AMMO TRANSFER, RETURN TO
	PIER 12
09 JUL	CURTS HOSTED PICNIC TO INTRODUCE THE OFFICERS AND
	CREW OF USS JOHN S. MCCAIN TO THE OFFICERS AND CREW
	OF JDS TACHIKAZE
11 JUL	DEPART YOKOSUKA, JAPAN ENR SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA VIA
	PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII
21 JUL	ARR PEARL HARBOR, EMBARK 32 TIGERS
23 JUL	U/W TO SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
29 JUL	ARR SAN DIEGO
01 AUG	DCC (S/W) RETIREMENT
04 AUG	U/W TO SEAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA FOR AMMO OFFLOAD





05 AUG	AMMO OFFLOAD, U/W TO SAN DIEGO
07 AUG	COMMENCE UPKEEP PERIOD, DEFUEL DFM
08 AUG	DEFUEL JP5
11 AUG	DSRA 8 BEGINS
12 AUG	PC1 (S/W) RETIREMENT
13 AUG	AT MIDNIGHT COMMENCE DEADSTICKING USS CURTS TO
	DRYDOCK AFDM 14 STEADFAST
15 SEP	PUGET SOUND NAVAL SHIPYARD WORKER KILLED WHILE
	WORKING ON BOAT DAVIT
03 OCT	CHANGE OF COMMAND, CDR MARK S. WELCH RELIEVED CDR
	MICHAEL S. FRICK AS COMMANDING OFFICER OF USS CURTS
24 OCT	AFTER INITIAL DELAYS, CURTS UNDOCKED FROM STEADFAST
	(AFDM 14) AND MOVED TO PIER 13, COMPLETEING A 12 HOUR
	EVOLUTION
03 NOV	LOA COMMENCES
05 NOV	SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF LOA
10 NOV	FAST CRUISE
12 NOV	U/W FOR SEA TRIALS, RETURN TO PIER 13
13 NOV	PRT
14 NOV	PRT, END DSRA 8
17 NOV	U/W ENR SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA WHILE CONDUCTING
	OPERATIONAL CHECKS ON ALL EQUIPMENT
21 NOV	ARR SAN FRANCISCO
24 NOV	U/W ENR SAN DIEGO
25 NOV	ARR SAN DIEGO, PIER 5
27 NOV	CELEBRATED THANKSGIVING ON THE MESS DECKS
01 DEC	U/W FOR SEAL BEACH, VIA POINT LOMA FUEL PIER
02 DEC	ARR SEAL BEACH FOR AMMO ONLOAD, U/W FOR SOCAL
	OPAREA UPON COMPLETION OF AMMO ONLOAD
05 DEC	ARR SAN DIEGO PIER 5
08 DEC	COMMENCED LATR FOR SUPPLY DEPARTMENT
12 DEC	LATR ENDED
15 DEC	CART II COMMENCED
19 DEC	CART II ENDED; COMMENCE HOLIDAY LEAVE PERIOD





Narrative 1997

a. January.

(1) CURTS was the first ship in six years to visit Sendai, Japan. In a space of three days, CURTS hosted over 1600 people as her crew gave tours of the ship.

b. February.

(1) CURTS departed Yokosuka on Southern Swing 97 Deployment. The first stop was for a brief pre-exercise conference in Sasebo, Japan. After the conference, CURTS participated in SHAREM-120A with USS FIFE, USS CURTIS WILBUR, JDS AMAGIRI, JDS YUUGIRI, USS TUNNY, JDS HAYASHIO, HSL 51 DET FOUR.

c. March.

- (1) On the first of the month, CURTS arrived in Guam. During her brief twoday stop, CURTS sailors enjoyed Guamanian hospitality at a local festival hosted by the mayor.
- (2) Operation Tandem Thrust 97, a joint training exercise between all branches of the United States and Australian militaries, occurred in the vicinity of the Great Barrier Reef. CURTS operated as both the opposing force and as a friendly carrier escort at varying times during the operation. Tropical Cyclone Justin forced numerous readjustments to the schedule, but the exercise still underlined the importance of continued interoperability between nations.
- (3) At the conclusion of the exercise, CURTS pulled into the small port of Gladstone, Queensland. CURTS also visited Sydney, New South Wales.

d. April.

- (1) CURTS' next stop was Melbourne, New South Wales. While inport Melbourne, CURTS hosted a reception sponsored by Toohey's for the Australian-American Association. It was a smashing success.
- (2) After transiting the Great Australian Bight, CURTS visited the port of Fremantle, Western Australia.

Encl (3)

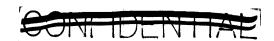




- (3) CURTS next port of call was the resort island of Bali. Indonesia.
- (4) To balance out the fun of Bali, CURTS pulled into Surabaya, Indonesia for the purpose of having some minor shipwork done.

e. May.

- (1) After a two day transit from Surabaya, CURTS arrived in the fine city of Singapore.
- (2) CURTS stayed in Singapore for four days, then left for Sattahip, Thailand. While inport Sattahip, CURTS hosted a pre-exercise reception for the Royal Thai Navy in preparation for Operation Sea Eagle. The RTN Commodore, COMDESRON FIFTEEN, and the wardrooms of RTS PHUTATPHA CHULALOUCK, RTS RATTANAKOSIN, and USS FIFE.
- (3) The next five days consisted of a high operation tempo as the ships conducted gunnery, maneuvering, and radio exercises. Once again, the importance of interoperability was highlighted.
- (4) At the conclusion of the exercise, CURTS anchored off Pattaya Beach, Thailand for five well deserved days of rest and relaxation. Also present at anchorage were USS INDEPENDENCE, USS FIFE, USS CURTIS WILBUR, and USS HONOLULU.
- (5) With five days of liberty under their belts, the officers and crew of CURTS weighed anchor and prepared for Operation Cobra Gold 97, held in the Gulf of Thailand. During this exercise, CURTS took on the role of Opposing Forces Commander and directed the efforts of two Thai fast patrol boats in addition to her own helicopter detachment. Each day CURTS hid in radio and radar silence. Each night she ran with either deceptive lighting or no lights at all. As OPFOR, CURTS managed to simulate destroying the high value units of both the carrier battle group and the amphibious ready group in addition to some of their escorts. CURTS demonstrated the lethality of a small vessel with a highly trained crew even in the face of a larger, better outfitted foe.
- (6) Upon completion of the exercise, CURTS rejoined the carrier task group enroute to Hong Kong. Enroute to Hong Kong, CURTS participated in joint training with the Royal Australian Navy. While the rest of the group anchored out in the bay, CURTS had the fortune of going pierside in Kowloon, thus saving the crew from long boat rides to and from liberty. The INDEPENDENCE task group had the honor of being the last U.S. battle group to be in Hong Kong before its return to China.



f. June.

- (1) On her way back to Yokosuka, Japan, CURTS participated in one last exercise with the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force. In a fitting circle of events, CURTS began and ended her deployment with an Under Sea Warfare exercise in conjunction with the Japanese, the latter one ASWEX 97-5JA.
- (2) After a fast-paced, port-hopping four months, CURTS' crew looked forward to spending the next thirty days in a stand down with family and friends.

g. July.

- (1) USS JOHN S. McCAIN relieved CURTS at the tip of the spear. At the conclusion of the thirty day stand down, CURTS bid Japan "Sayonara" and left for San Diego via Pearl Harbor.
- (2) In Pearl Harbor, CURTS embarked 32 friends and family members of the officers and crew for the Tiger Cruise. For the next six days, as CURTS made her way to San Diego, the tigers had the opportunity to experience almost every aspect of ship life.
 - (3) On 29 JULY 1997, CURTS arrived in her new homeport of San Diego.

h. August.

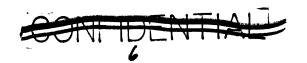
- (1) In preparation for her first DSRA in six years, CURTS went to Seal Beach and off-loaded all her ammunition. At midnight on 12 August 1997, CURTS deadsticked into dry dock, STEADFAST (AFDM 14) with the assistance of two tugs.
- (2) On 01 August 1997, DCC (SW) retired after 22 years of loyal service.
- (3) On 12 August 1997, PC1 retired after 20 years of loyal service.

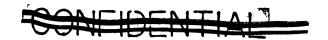
i. September.

(1) On 15 September 1997, a Puget Sound Naval Shipyard worker suffered severe head injuries while working on the boat davit. He died in the hospital about eight hours later.

j. October.

(1) On 03 October 1997, CDR Mark S. Welch relieved CDR Michael S. Frick as commanding officer of USS CURTS.





(2) CURTS left dry dock, STEADFAST AFDM-14, on 24 OCT 97 and moved to pier 13. During DSRA 8, CURTS received the Plastics At Sea compactor modification in addition to PRC on the DC deck. Also, her hull was chosen to evaluate the effectiveness of two different types of paint below the waterline.

k. November

- (1) Fast Cruise on 10 November 97 followed by Sea Trials on the 12th.
- (2) On 17 November 97, CURTS got underway for San Francisco, California, and arrived on 21 November 97. After a three day visit, CURTS got underway for her return trip to San Diego, California.

1. December

- (1) CURTS departed her homeport enroute to Seal Beach, California on 01 December 97 for ammunition onload and arrived in Seal Beach on 02 December 97. She departed for local oparea drills that same day upon completion of onload.
 - (2) CURTS arrived back in San Diego, California on 05 December 97.
- (3) Supply Department underwent Logisitics Training Review assessment the week of 08 December 97.
 - (4) CURTS Christmas Party held on 12 December 97 at Town and Country Hotel.
 - (5) CART II held for CURTS the week of 15 December 97.
 - (6) Holiday stand-down commenced on 19 December 97 until 05 January 98.



ADMIRAL MAURICE E. CURTS UNITED STATES NAVY

USS CURTS (FFG 38) is named for the late Admiral Maurice E. Curts, United States Navy (1898-1976), former Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet and heroic cruiser commander of World War II.

After graduating from the United States Naval Academy in June 1919, Admiral Curts reported aboard USS CHESTER for service as a Midshipman. He subsequently served at sea in destroyers of the Atlantic Fleet and in the aircraft carrier USS SARATOGA, and ashore at the Naval Operating Base, Hampton Roads, Virginia and in the Bureau of Engineering, Navy Department.

Admiral Curts studied the emerging technology of radio at the Naval Postgraduate School in Annapolis, Maryland and Harvard University between 1926 and 1928. These studies led to his assignment as Officer-in-Charge, Radio and Sound, Naval Research Laboratory in 1936, where he received a commendation from the Secretary of the Navy for his contributions to the development of the experimental "radar".

At the outbreak of World War II, Admiral Curts was the Communications Officer for the staff of Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his successful and innovative organization of joint communications during the first months of the war.

Admiral Curts won the Navy Cross and Silver Star Medal for extraordinary heroism while commanding the cruiser USS COLUMBIA during the Leyte Gulf landing, the Battle of Surigao Strait, the Lingayen Gulf landing and the liberation of Borneo. During the initial Lingayen Gulf landing, he continued to lead his cruiser in action despite severe damage inflicted by two suicide planes which had left 100 of his men dead or wounded.

As Chief of Staff and Aide to Commander, FIRST Carrier Task Force, Pacific Fleet, Admiral Curts was present at the formal surrender of the Japanese on board the battleship USS MISSOURI in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945. Tours as Commander of Cruiser Division Twenty, Task Force One Hundred, and South Atlantic Force followed.

Admiral Curts served as Deputy Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet from 1955 until 1958. On 13 January 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Admiral Curts Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet. Admiral Curts served in that capacity until 1 February 1958. One month later, he assumed duty as Commander, Western Sea Frontier, serving in that capacity until his retirement on 1 April 1960. Admiral Curts passed away on 16 February 1976.