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1976

USS ENTERPRISE CVN 65
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco 96601

CVN65/32:kg
5750
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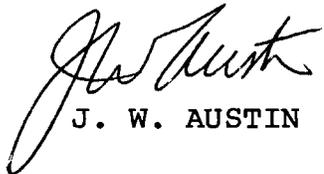
From: Commanding Officer, USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: 1976 Command History; forwarding of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) ENTERPRISE 1976 Command History

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded as USS ENTERPRISE's 1976 Command History.


J. W. AUSTIN

Copy to:
Director of Naval History (OP-09B9)
CINCPACFLT
COMNAVAIRPAC

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COMMAND HISTORY - 1976

The Bicentennial Year, 1976, began with a period of intensive training in preparation for a Western Pacific deployment with the U. S. SEVENTH Fleet. Workups included Valiant Heritage, a multi-national, two-week exercise which was scheduled at an unusually early stage in the pre-deployment cycle. The exercise was made even more challenging by a requirement to rapidly achieve the level of expertise required to perform anti-submarine operations involving the introduction of the S-3A Viking to the air wing and it's corresponding Tactical Support Center to the ship.

The first five months of the 76-77 cruise were marked by a lengthy journey to Australian waters and the Big "E"s participation in Kangaroo II. The operation was held off the coast of Australia and included ships from the Australian and New Zealand navies. Kangaroo II concluded with a port visit to Hobart, Tasmania. The general consensus of crewmembers is that Hobart is the best liberty port west of Alameda.

A last minute change to the ship's schedule allowed a five day visit to Hong Kong late in the year. This port is traditionally one of the fine places to visit during a long deployment.

The year ended with preparations for the latter portion of the cruise, an Indian Ocean deployment. A year of intensive exercises had well prepared CVN65 for this challenge.

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CHRONOLOGY - 1976

1-5 January	In port Alameda
6-15 January	SOCAL OPS (IRFT)
16-18 January	At anchor San Diego
19-23 January	SOCAL OPS (IRFT)
24-25 January	In port San Diego
26-28 January	SOCAL OPS (IRFT)
29 January-17 February	In port Alameda
18-26 February	SOCAL AIROPS (FLEETEX 1-76 Workup)
27 February-1 March	In port San Diego
2-13 March	SOCAL AIROPS (FLEETEX 1-76, Valiant Heritage)
14-28 March	In port Alameda
29 March-9 April	SOCAL OPS (Air Refresher Training)
10-26 April	In port Alameda
27 April	Dependent's Day Cruise
28 April-5 May	SOCAL AIROPS
6-9 May	In port San Diego
10-18 May	SOCAL AIROPS
19 May-7 June	In port Alameda
8-12 June	SOCAL AIROPS (WEPTRAEX)
13 June	At anchor San Diego

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14-17 June	SOCAL AIROPS
18-20 June	In port San Diego
21-30 June	SOCAL AIROPS (ORE and READIEK 4-76)
1 July	Transit from San Diego to Alameda
2-29 July	In port Alameda (Preparation for Overseas Movement Period)
30 July-4 August	Transit to Hawaii
5 August	In port Pearl Harbor
6-9 August	MIDPAC AIROPS (COMPTUEX 1-7T)
10-12 August	In port Pearl Harbor
13-15 August	MIDPAC AIROPS (COMPTUEX 1-7T)
16 August	In port Pearl Harbor
17 August-5 September	Transit to Subic Bay, RP (ASW OPS; INCHOPEX)
6-24 September	In port Subic Bay
25 September-28 October	Transit to Australia (KANGAROO II)
29 October-4 November	At anchor Hobart, Tasmania
5-21 November	Transit to Subic Bay (ASWEX 2-77; ORSE)
22-27 November	In port Subic Bay
28 November	Transit to Hong Kong
29 November-3 December	At anchor Hong Kong
4 December	Transit to Subic Bay
5-13 December	In port Subic Bay

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14-28 December

South China Sea AIROPS
(MULTIPLEX 1-77 and MISSILEX
1-77)

29-31 December

In port Subic Bay

1. Command Organization

a. Commanding Officer

CAPT C. C. SMITH, Jr., 9 April 1974-10 December 1976
CAPT J. W. AUSTIN, 10-31 December 1976

b. Mission and Function of Command. The mission of ENTERPRISE, as delineated in NWIP 11-20, is "to support and operate aircraft, to engage in attacks on targets afloat and ashore which threaten our control of the sea, and to engage in sustained operations in support of other forces."

c. Composition of Command. On board manning levels at the year's end are shown below:

Officers

Ship's Company	165
CVW-14	280
CTF-77/CCG-5	25
Civilians	45

Enlisted

Ship's Company	2800
CVW-14	1300
CTF-77/CCG-5	30

d. Carrier Air Wing FOURTEEN was embarked at various times throughout 1976 and was composed of VF-1 "Wolfpack", VF-2 "Bounty Hunters", VA-97 "War Hawks", VA-27 "Royal Maces", VA-196 "Main Battery", VAW-113 "Black Eagles", VAQ-134 "Garuda", RVAH-1 "Tigers", HS-2 "Golden Falcons", and VS-29 "Vikings". In addition, VQ-1 Detachment Charlie was embarked during the cruise (31 August onward).

e. Location of Homeport. Alameda Naval Air Station, California, remained ENTERPRISE's homeport throughout 1976.

2. Summary of Operations

a. REFTRA Period (1-28 January). ENTERPRISE conducted Refresher Training (REFTRA) and supported carrier qualifications during most of January. REFTRA consisted of a demanding mixture of battle problems, inspection, and general quarters drills and culminated in a graded three-hour simulated naval battle. The ship's successful performance was reflected in the rating: "Outstanding" in the areas of ship control, electronics, and aviation and "Excellent" in navigation, communications, CIC procedures, and personnel casualty handling.

Refresher Training also afforded an opportunity for reserve training. Thirty-two reservists from CV-220, a reserve unit in San Jose, California, were embarked during much of the training period.

The workup routine was interrupted on 20 January when the ship was called upon to provide medical assistance to a civilian electronics technician who had suffered a heart attack aboard the USNS De STEIGUER. Steaming toward De STEIGUER at thirty knots, two helicopters were launched, and the patient was receiving treatment aboard the Big "E" within hours of the call for assistance. The patient was subsequently transferred to San Diego.

The at-sea period* ended on an unconventional note when a small fishing boat was alleged to have been swamped by the ship's wake while entering San Francisco Bay. The incident is presently under litigation.

b. Valiant Heritage (28 January - 13 March). Most of this period was involved in preparation for FLEETEX 1-76 (Valiant Heritage). Valiant Heritage was a naval exercise composed of 40 ships from 5 nations off the coast of southern California.

Although the "fighting" would last only twelve days, Valiant Heritage's complexity required several months to review numerous operations orders, to conduct pre-exercise conferences, and to train several ship's "warfare teams"

*"At-sea period" is defined as a period lasting from when a ship departs one port until it arrives in the next port or anchorage.

in San Diego. The 18-26 February at-sea period was devoted to pre-exercise air refresher training and to the continued evaluation of two new systems, the S-3A Viking/TSC and the SLQ-17/WLR-8 electronic warfare suite. Although equipment changes are not normally included in this type of narrative, these two systems are important enough to warrant special mention since they have significantly upgraded the defensive posture against the submarine and cruise missile threats.

The ship became the THIRDFLT "ready duty" carrier and assumed a commitment to SEVENTHFLT as part of a "surge force" on 27 February 1976. This assignment required a higher alert posture for the remainder of the period in CONUS.

February ended with a visit to NAS North Island, the Air Wing FOURTEEN Commander's Change of Command, and an announcement that ENTERPRISE had won her third consecutive, fourth overall, Battle Efficiency "E" from COMNAVAIRPAC. Departmental efficiency awards were given to CIC, Air, Engineering, and Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance. Communications and Weapons received runner-up awards.

FLEETEX 1-76 started with an exercise emergency sortie from San Diego on 2 March. Details of the Valiant Heritage participation have been summarized in COMTHIRDFLT's FLEETEX 1-76 Final Report.

c. ORE Workups (14 March - 30 June). Four more at-sea periods were completed before commencing final pre-deployment tests. The initial at-sea period was marked by tragedy. On the evening of 3 April, an A-7E from VA-125, the Pacific Replacement Air Group, crashed while attempting an arrested landing. The Corsair II struck the round down, sheered off its starboard landing gear strut, continued down the flight deck and went off the bow. Although no aircraft were hit, a member of the Air Department and the pilot of the A-7 were killed.

The following at-sea period (28 April - 5 May) commenced on a positive note when more than 3,000 dependents and relatives were embarked on an eight-hour dependent's day cruise. CVW-14 staged an air show and numerous tours were conducted throughout the ship. The festivities concluded with RADM GLINDEMAN presenting CAPT SMITH with a plaque in honor of the award of the COMNAVAIRPAC Battle Efficiency "E".

The 10-17 May at-sea period was highlighted by more specialized training including a team training visit from the Nuclear Weapons Training Group, Pacific, and a three-day anti-submarine warfare exercise.

The fourth at-sea period of the ORE workups (8-12 June) commenced when the first of three groups of midshipmen were embarked for summer cruise. Their visit coincided with the Weapons Training Exercise which was conducted during the period. The third Carrier Readiness Inspection (CRI) of the workup period was also completed during these few days. The CRI, a cleanliness and habitability inspection, was conducted by Commander, Carrier Group SEVEN, RADM GLINDEMAN.

The crew enjoyed a stand down day on 13 June while anchored off San Diego. The stand down was highlighted by rope climbing, tug-of-wars, and various track events associated with the ship's Captain's Cup competition.

The remainder of June was devoted to the Operational Readiness Evaluation and READIEX 4-76, a scaled down version of Valiant Heritage. Once these "final exams" were completed, the ship moored at North Island on 30 June. This was to accommodate off-loading the complement of F-14 aircraft which had been grounded Navy-wide. A return transit to Alameda was made to be followed by the Preparations for Overseas Movement (POM) period.

The first half of 1976 was summarized by Commander, Carrier Group SEVEN as follows:

During this period ENTERPRISE conducted refresher OPS with her air wing in preparation for participation in FLEETEX 1-76. Her performance in FLEETEX 1-76 was excellent in all respects and in fact outstanding when viewed from the standpoint of time into the training cycle. ENTERPRISE conducted a TYCOM carrier qualification period and additional OPS with her embarked air wing leading to successful completion of a WEPTRAEX and ORE and participation in READIEX 4-76. SLQ-17 and WLR-8 TECH EVAL and OP EVAL were both successfully completed during this time frame. Her performance was without exception excellent throughout the EASTPAC pre-deployment workup. . . This team is fully prepared to assume duties with the SEVENTH Fleet.

d. The Transit (30 July-5 September). ENTERPRISE began her westward transit on 30 July with Captain C. C. SMITH, Jr.

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serving in the dual role as Task Group Commander and ENTERPRISE Commanding Officer. The transit differed from previous CVN-65 transits in that routine "open ocean" flight operations were conducted during periods when no divert fields were available.

The Alameda-Hawaii transit was used for numerous anti-air, strike, and antisubmarine warfare exercises. COMPTUEX 1-7T was conducted during the stay in the Hawaiian area. This operation included numerous air intercept exercises, ASW exercises, CVW-14 and Marine carrier landing operations, and a successful Basic Point Defense Missile (BPDMS) firing. The Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force Destroyers AKIGUMO and AOKUMO and a P-2 Neptune squadron joined U. S. units in these evolutions.

The Hawaiian operations also allowed time for three short visits to Pearl Harbor. Numerous briefings were conducted and the CINCPACFLT Change of Command was held aboard on 12 August with ADM HAYWARD relieving ADM WEISNER.

The transit from Hawaii to Subic Bay was highlighted on 25 August when ENTERPRISE and RANGER were reconnoitered by two separate waves of Soviet TU-95 "Bear" reconnaissance aircraft. A total of five TU-95's were intercepted by ENTERPRISE F-14's and A-7E's while in the vicinity of the task group.

Carrier Striking Force SEVENTH Fleet's "INCHOPEX" commenced with the arrival of CTF-77, RADM HARRIS and his staff on 31 August. INCHOPEX challenged the ENTERPRISE task group with numerous "hostile" submarines, ships, and aircraft belonging to "Orange" country.

ENTERPRISE arrived at Subic Bay, RP, on 6 September. The planned three-week sojourn at Leyte Pier was briefly interrupted by Typhoon Iris. In order to prevent possible damage to ship and pier, the ship anchored in the center of Subic Bay from 14 September until the danger had subsided on the sixteenth. The in-port period was used to prepare for extended operations in the Tasmanian and Coral Seas. The operations would include Exercise KANGAROO II with units of the Australian and New Zealand armed forces.

e. Kangaroo Two (12-25 October). ENTERPRISE commenced the four thousand mile transit to southern Australian waters on 25 September. Cyclic air operations were relaxed a week later for "Crossing the Line" ceremonies and a restful afternoon which included a firepower demonstration by HMNZS OTAGO.

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The 9-11 October pre-exercise period was spent in air refresher training and dissimilar air combat maneuvering training between CVW-14 Tomcat fighters and Royal Australian Air Force Mirage III's. A few lucky crewmembers were able to spend this period attending pre-exercise meetings in the Sydney area.

ENTERPRISE commenced the pre-exercise period with a new Executive Officer when CAPT J. R. BATZLER was relieved by CDR R. J. KELLY on 9 October.

KANGAROO II began with a "bang" on 12 October when ENTERPRISE commenced fifty-five hours of continuous air strikes and defensive operations against the RAAF Williamtown target complex. Once these strikes were concluded, the task force began a six hundred mile transit north to the Rockhampton area. "Hostile" Australian submarines, PTF's, F-111's, and Mirages enlivened the transit with continual harrassment while CVW-14 aircrews responded with equal vigor.

The transit was interrupted on the evening of 17 October while ENTERPRISE supported a MEDEVAC operation. A marine attached to the USS OKINAWA had suffered a concussion and required transfer to an Australian hospital. ENTERPRISE made a course diversion in order to come within helicopter range and the transfer was completed without incident.

Operations were again interrupted on 22 October by a pair of unusual events. First, a helicopter from HS-2 experienced engine failure on takeoff and made a forced landing approximately one mile from the ship. Numerous attempts by the SH-3 crew to get their helo airborne on a single engine provided some exciting moments for all. The crew was finally forced to deploy flotation gear and secure the engine. A Deck Department motor whale boat retrieved the crew and helped maneuver the helicopter alongside ENTERPRISE where Air Department personnel raised the aircraft using the ship's crane.

The afternoon was equally exciting. An A-7E pilot sighted a group of Taiwanese fishermen who had been stranded on a small island after their boat holed on a reef some four days earlier. They were recovered by helicopter, examined by ENTERPRISE medical personnel, and transferred to Australia.

CINCPACFLT's message of congratulations to ENTERPRISE summarized the day's activities:

The successful rescue accomplished by USS ENTERPRISE, as detailed in reference A, is noted with pleasure. The alert sighting and subsequent actions leading to the pickup of the stranded fishermen may well have saved their lives. All aircrews involved in this effort are to be congratulated for their superb professionalism. Additionally, the potential loss of a helicopter after water landing was averted through prompt and proper execution of procedures and a valuable aircraft was recovered aboard with relatively minor damages. These two evolutions surely made the day a notable success for ENTERPRISE. Well done.
T. B. HAYWARD

The final phase of KANGAROO II consisted of operations designed to support the task force, a Marine amphibious landing, and forces ashore. The exercise concluded on 25 October when the "hot washup" conference was held aboard HMAS MELBOURNE.

Four days later, ENTERPRISE was met at the mouth of the Derwent River by hundreds of pleasure boats and escorted to anchorage at Hobart, Tasmania, for a port call. The week-long visit exceeded all expectations of the crew and Captain C. C. SMITH, Jr., described it as follows:

I believe that the visit to Hobart was an unqualified success. Each crewmember I've spoken to says he enjoyed the overwhelming hospitality shown to us by the citizens of Hobart. Speaking from personal experience, I can truly say that this unprecedented visit was one of the most enjoyable, though busy, port calls of my 24 years of naval service. Despite periods of wind and rain, about 40,000 visitors waited long hours to clamor aboard the 200-seat ferry boats to see the ship. These personal guests of the crew were in addition to the more than 1,200 visitors who were part of the organized tours.

The extraordinary reception given to ENTERPRISE crewmembers defies description. It was the most successful port call of the cruise and a press release describing the visit in greater detail is included in Section 3. A special thanks from the crew of ENTERPRISE to the people of Tasmania was sent to the Lord Mayor of Hobart in the form of a \$10,000 donation to charity which had been raised by the crew.

f. More At-Sea Periods and a Christmas Present (5 November - 31 December)

The return transit to Subic Bay (5-21 November) presented ENTERPRISE with more challenges in the form of an antisubmarine warfare exercise and the Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination (ORSE). The Reactor and Engineering Departments had been preparing for the ORSE for a number of weeks and the final preparations were assisted by the COMNAVAIRPAC Mobile Training Team during the first part of the transit. The MTT's departure was followed by the arrival of the ORSE team on 15 November and the ORSE which lasted until 20 November. This period also marked the change of command of Commander, Carrier Striking Force SEVENTH Fleet when RADM GLINDEMAN relieved RADM HARRIS.

ENTERPRISE returned to Subic Bay on 22 November for a short stay that was highlighted by a ship's picnic celebrating the Big E's fifteenth birthday. The "Christmas present" came in the form of a schedule change which allowed a one-week trip to Hong Kong.

The visit to Hong Kong (29 November - 3 December) was enjoyable and afforded many crewmembers an opportunity for a mid-cruise reunion with their families. On a serious note, the visit also exposed the crew to the potent drugs available in Hong Kong and was marred by the drug-related deaths of two ENTERPRISE crewmen.

ENTERPRISE returned to Subic Bay on 5 December and prepared for the change of command ceremony that would take place on 10 December. The change of command saw Captain C. C. SMITH, Jr., relinquish command of ENTERPRISE to Captain J. W. AUSTIN. CAPT SMITH was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral. The ceremony was attended by Vice Admiral BALDWIN, COMSEVENTHFLT.

The last line period of the year (14-28 December) included MULTIPLEX 1-77 and MISSILEX 1-77, preludes for a similar, larger exercise which was scheduled for January 1977.

Unfortunately, MULTIPLEX was briefly interrupted on the morning of the 19th when an F-14 from VF-2 was lost at sea three miles ahead of the ship. The F-14 experienced a flight control malfunction while attempting to land on ENTERPRISE, boltered, and was unable to maintain directional flight control. The tip of a wing clipped the tails of two

aircraft parked on the port bow after the F-14 became airborne. The crew ejected due to the failure of the flight control system and they were recovered unharmed by the ship's helicopters.

The December at-sea period was also used to refresh pilots from VRC-50 and VMA-223 in carrier landings. On 23 December, a mishap occurred when the pilot of a Marine A-4M Skyhawk lost control of his aircraft just prior to launch and ended up in the port catwalk. The pilot was unharmed and the aircraft was retrieved with minor damage.

The year 1976 ended with a little over half of ENTERPRISE's tenth deployment completed. As was the case in ENTERPRISE's previous WESTPAC deployment, the New Year promised a visit to the Indian Ocean and the uncertainty associated with such operations. However, future deployments will be taken in stride by this capital ship which has more than fifteen years' experience in the most demanding of environments.

3. Statistics and Speciality Notes

a. Awards

National Defense Service Medal from 25 November 1961

Navy Expeditionary Medal (Cuba) for operations from 19-23 October 1962

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Cuba) for operations from 24 October - December 1962

Atlantic Fleet Battle Efficiency "E" (first award) in 1963

CNO Majorie Sterrett Battleship Fund Award in 1963

Atlantic Fleet Battle Efficiency "E" (second award) - consecutive) (Air, Weapons, Engineering, and Reactor received departmental awards) in 1964

Vietnam Service Medal 2 December 1965 - 14 January 1966

Vietnam Service Medal (first star) from 4-23 February 1966

Vietnam Service Medal (second star) from 16 March - 12 April 1966

Vietnam Service Medal (third star) from 22 April - 14
May 1966

Vietnam Service Medal (fourth star) from 23 May - 6 June
1966

Pacific Fleet Battle Efficiency "E" (first award) in 1966
(Operations, Communications, Weapons, and Engineering received
departmental awards)

Navy Unit Commendation from 18 December 1966 - 20 June 1967

Vietnam Service Medal (fifth star) from 17 December 1966 -
28 May 1967

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (first star) from 23
January - 22 March 1968

Navy Unit Commendation (first star) from 22 February 1968 -
26 June 1968

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (second star) from 20
April - 11 May 1969

Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Meritorious Unit Citation
from 2 December 1965 - 16 June 1969

Meritorious Unit Commendation from 2 July 1971 - 3 February
1972

Pacific Fleet Battle Efficiency "E" (second award) in 1972

Navy Unit Commendation (second star) from 3 October 1972 -
22 February 1973

Pacific Fleet Battle Efficiency "E" (third award) in 1974

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (third star) for 29-30
April 1975

Meritorious Unit Commendation for 22-30 April 1975

Pacific Fleet Battle Efficiency "E" (fourth award) in 1976

b. Distinguished Visitors

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31 March - 1 April Astronauts including CAPT John YOUNG, CAPT Joseph KERWIN, CDR Bruce McCANDLESS, and CDR Richard TRULY

10 May RADM A. E. HILL, COMTRAPAC

15 May Mr. Martin Milner, Actor

12 June VADM Robert E. BALDWIN, COMNAVAIRPAC

15 June BGD T. E. CLIFFORD, Commander, 26 NORAD Region

24 June Mr. Yoshiki Hidaka and Japanese Broadcasting Corp. Documentary Team

25 June VADM R. P. COOGAN, COMTHIRDFLT

5 August U.S.M.C. Group led by BGD TWOMEY

6 August Office of Telecommunication and Command and Control Systems in the Office of Secretary of Defense visitors led by Mr. R. H. Shriver, the Director

7 August RADM J. W. MOREAU, Commandant 14th CG District; MJG W. A. BOYSON, USA Senior Medical Officer, Tripler Army Hospital

12 August CINCPACFLT Change of Command visitors, including CNO, CINCPACFLT, and COMSEVENTHFLT

25 September General R. C. Espino, R.P. Defense Chief of Staff; MGJ F. V. Ramos, AFP Chief of Constabulary; BGD F. Afat, Commanding General Philippine Army, BGD S. Sarmiento, Commanding General Philippine Air Force, and COMM E. Ogbinar, Flag Officer in Command, Philippine Navy

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22 October - 4 November Honorable W. A. Nielson, Premier
of Tasmania
Mr. Douglas R. Plaister, Lord Mayor
of Hobart
Miss Australia 1976
Miss Tasmania 1975
Honorable J. W. Hargrove, U. S.
Ambassador to Australia
CAPT B. T. SUTHERLAND, U. S. Naval
Attache
Honorable Malcom Frazer, Prime
Minister of Australia
Sir John Kerr, Governor General of
Australia . . . and numerous other
Australian friends

c. A Note of Sources. Additional details concerning
ENTERPRISE 1976 activities may be found in COMTHIRDFLT FLEETEX
1-76 Final Report, Carrier Air Wing FOURTEEN and individual
squadron command histories, and the general and speciality
cruise reports to be released upon conclusion of the cruise.