



Rec'd 7/21/92

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS GARY (FFG-51)
FPO AP 96666-1505

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750
Ser FFG 51/ADM
12 Jun 92

From: Commanding Officer, USS GARY (FFG 51)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,
Washington, D.C. 20374-0571

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) Command History for 1991
(2) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
(3) CO's Photograph and Biography
(4) Ship's Photograph
(5) Ship's Newspaper (GARYTIMES)
(6) Familygram
(7) Selected Kudo Messages

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (7) are forwarded.


R. E. RATCLIFF

USS GARY (FFG 51)
COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

Homeported in Long Beach, CA, USS GARY (FFG 51) is the forty-fifth ship of the Oliver Hazard Perry (FFG 7) class of guided missile frigates. Her primary mission is to provide anti-air, anti-submarine and anti-surface protection for military and merchant convoys, amphibious task forces, and underway logistics groups.

The Commanding Officer has the ultimate authority, responsibility and accountability for the performance of the ship and her crew. The Executive Officer, as second-in-command, is responsible for the implementation of Navy policies and regulations as applicable to the ship. Each Department Head reports to the Commanding Officer via the Executive Officer.

USS GARY is under the administrative command of Commander, Destroyer Squadron NINE, which is also homeported in Long Beach, CA.

SHIP ORGANIZATION FOR 1991

COMMANDING: CDR Ronald E. Ratcliff (4th Commanding Officer)

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: LCDR Edward J. Gilmore
Relieved by LCDR Kevin R. Cheezum

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

SHIP'S CONTROL: LT [REDACTED]

ASSISTANT NAVIGATOR / SC-1 Division
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER / SC-2 Division
FIRST LIEUTENANT / SC-3 Division
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT / X Division

COMBAT SYSTEMS: LT [REDACTED]
Relieved by LT [REDACTED]

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER OFFICER / CS-1 Division
ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE OFFICER / CS-2 Division
ORDNANCE OFFICER / CS-3 Division
ELECTRONIC MATERIALS OFFICER / CS-4 Division

ENGINEERING: LT [REDACTED]
Relieved by LT [REDACTED]

MAIN PROPULSION ASSISTANT / E-1 Division
DAMAGE CONTROL ASSISTANT / E-2 Division
ELECTRICAL OFFICER / E-3 Division

SUPPLY: LT [REDACTED]
Relieved by LT [REDACTED]

STOREKEEPERS / S-1 Division
FOOD SERVICES / S-2 Division

DISBURSING OFFICER / S-3 Division

SENIOR CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE COMMAND:

QMCS(SW) James A. Lockett

Relieved by EMCS(SW) Todd Munger

1991 AIR DETACHMENT

OFFICER-IN-CHARGE: LCDR [REDACTED]

OPERATIONS OFFICER

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

MAINTENANCE OFFICER

TACTICS OFFICER

Maintenance and aircrew personnel

Light Antisubmarine Helicopter Squadron (HSL) 45 Detachment FOUR was embarked for the 1991 Arabian Gulf deployment. The detachment embarked on 28 May and was onboard until 25 November. They operated two SH-60B Seahawk helicopters, designated Lonewolf 53 and Lonewolf 54. The detachment was comprised of six pilots, three aircrewmembers and eleven enlisted maintenance technicians.

The primary mission of the air detachment was to support Arabian Gulf surveillance and anti-mine operations, with a secondary emphasis on logistics support. The aircraft effectively and capably extended the "eyes" of the ship, through utilization of the LAMPS SRQ-4 data link. They patrolled areas in the vicinity of the battlegroup on the lookout for mines and other shipping, using RADAR, ESM and visual observation to correlate contacts.

USS GARY (FFG 51)
COMMAND HISTORY 1991
CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

1 Jan New Year's Day

4 Jan TGU Assessment, NTCC Long Beach

7-11 Jan Engineering MTT Phase II

8 Jan Underway from NAVSTA Long Beach; ECC Drills

9 Jan ECC Drills

10 Jan ECC and Main Space Fire Drills; Moor Pier 16 NAVSTA Long Beach

12-13 Jan Training Readiness Evaluation

14-18 Jan Combat Systems Groom

14 Jan Underway from NAVSTA Long Beach; Vibration Analysis; M o o r
NAVSHIPSYSENGSTA Port Hueneme CA

15 Jan Battery Alignments

16 Jan Frocking Ceremony

18 Jan Underway from NAVSHIPSYSENGSTA Port Hueneme; 76mm Gun Shoot; Moor
NAVSTA Long Beach

20 Jan Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday

22-25 Jan 3M Assist Visit

23 Jan-1 Feb COMDESRON NINE Embarked

26 Jan Visit Ship

29 Jan Underway from NAVSTA Long Beach; Burial at Sea

30 Jan Moor NAVSTA Long Beach

11-22 Feb Interim Refresher Training

13 Feb Precision Anchoring

15 Feb Moor to a Buoy

18 Feb President's Day

19 Feb Precision Anchoring

22 Feb Outchop; Moor NAVSTA Long Beach

26 Feb-1 Mar HARPOON Tactical Qualification

26 Feb DC Olympics

27 Feb Mass Conflagration Drill

28 Feb Environmental Health Survey

4-14 Mar Restricted Availability

5 Mar COMDESRON NINE Engineering Review

11 Mar COMDESRON NINE Engineering Cold Check Review

13 Mar COMDESRON NINE Training Certification; Los Coyotes School Visit

15 Mar-10 Apr Battlegroup Foxtrot Training

15 Mar Underway from NAVSTA Long Beach; Ammunition On-load NAVWEPSTA Seal Beach CA

17 Mar Moor Pier 3 NAVSTA San Diego

18-21 Mar Engineering MTT Phase III

19 Mar Underway from NAVSTA San Diego

21 Mar RAS with USNS NAVASOTA; Rendezvous with Battlegroup Foxtrot

25 Mar MISSLEX/GUNEX

28 Mar Safety Standdown

31 Mar Easter Sunday

2 Apr RAS with USS ROANOKE; Highline Transfer

3 Apr ECC Drills

4 Apr Moor NAVSTA Long Beach

11-15 Apr Quick Fix Installation

15-18 Apr Operational Propulsion Plant Examination

17 Apr Underway from NAVSTA Long Beach

18 Apr Moor Pier 16 NAVSTA Long Beach

19 Apr Personnel Inspection and Awards Ceremony

21-23 Apr CMTQT HARPOON Certification

22-24 Apr Ship's Safety Survey; Hazardous Materials Review

22 Apr Ammunition On-load NAVWEPSTA Seal Beach CA

23-26 Apr CMTQT HARPOON Tactical Qualification

23 Apr NAVSURFGRU Long Beach Chaplain's Visit

25 Apr CMS Assist Visit

26 Apr Captain's Call and Awards Ceremony; GARY Awarded Silver Anchor for Retention Excellence

29 Apr-5 May READIEX 91-2B

29 Apr Underway from NAVSTA Long Beach

30 Apr-2 May Battlegroup Foxtrot Evaluation

4 May RAS with USS ROANOKE

9 May Moor NAVSTA Long Beach

10-21 May Planning for Overseas Movement (POM)

13-15 May CMTQT Certification

18 May Torrance Armed Forces Day Parade; Dependent's Day Cruise

20-24 May CSRT

25 May Ship's Picnic

28 May Deployed as part of Battlegroup Foxtrot; HSL 45 DET 4 Fly-on

29 May CIWS and Small Arms PACFIRE

30 May Aviation Safety Standdown

31 May-1 Jun ECC and Main Space Fire Drills

2 Jun RAS with USS ROANOKE

4 Jun 76mm PACFIRE

5-6 Jun ECC Drills

8-9 Jun ECC Drills

10 Jun RAS with USS ROANOKE

11 Jun Inchop to COMSEVENTHFLT

13 Jun RAS with USS ROANOKE

16 Jun RAS with USS ROANOKE

17-21 Jun OPERATION FIERY VIGIL

17 Jun Moor NAVSTA Subic Bay RP

18 Jun Enroute for Cebu RP with 314 civilians, 24 dogs and 7 cats

19 Jun Enroute for NAVSTA Subic Bay RP; RAS with USNS HASSAYAMPA

20 Jun Lonewolf 53 carries out search and rescue (SAR) mission to evacuate heat stroke victim from MV OCEAN WIZARD

21 Jun Enroute for Cebu RP with 288 civilians, 3 dogs and 1 cat

22 Jun Enroute for Singapore

24 Jun RAS with USS NIAGARA FALLS

26-30 Jun Anchored, Singapore

30 Jun Enroute for Penang, Malaysia; Transit of Straits of Malacca

1-6 Jul Moored Penang, Malaysia

6-12 Jul Indian Ocean Transit

7 Jul RAS with USS ROANOKE

8-9 Jul DC Drills

10 Jul RAS with USS ROANOKE

12 Jul Receipt of Stinger Missile DET from USS STEIN

13 Jul RAS with USS ROANOKE; Transit of Straits of Hormuz

15 Jul Moor Mina Sulman, Bahrain

15-22 Jul Tender Availability with USS SAMUEL GOMPERS

22-23 Jul Northern Arabian Gulf

23-24 Jul DC Drills

24 Jul RAS with USS ROANOKE

24-29 Jul Central Arabian Gulf

28 Jul RAS with USS ROANOKE

30 Jul-3 Aug Southern Arabian Gulf

31 Jul Escorted USNS PECOS through Straits of Hormuz

1 Aug RAS with USNS PECOS; Escorted USNS ANDREW J. HIGGINS through Straits

of Hormuz

2 Aug Escorted USS PYRO through Straits of Hormuz
3-5 Aug Inport Mina Sulman, Bahrain
5-9 Aug Central Arabian Gulf
6 Aug RAS with USS ROANOKE
7 Aug DC Drills
9 Aug RAS with USS ROANOKE; VERTREP with USS WHITE PLAINS
10-13 Aug Inport Al Jubayl, Saudi Arabia
13-14 Aug Saudi PASSEX
13 Aug Towing Exercise
15-22 Aug Central Arabian Gulf
15 Aug RAS with USS PYRO
18 Aug DC Drills
19 Aug RAS with USS ROANOKE
20-21 Aug Bombing Runs with CVW-11
23-24 Aug GULFEX IV
25 Aug RAS with USS ROANOKE
25-28 Aug Inport Mina Sulman, Bahrain
28 Aug-4 Sep Central Arabian Gulf
28 Aug 76mm PACFIRE
29 Aug RAS with USS ROANOKE
29-31 Aug ECC Drills
3 Sep 76mm PACFIRE
5-12 Sep Tender Availability with USS L. Y. SPEAR
12-13 Sep Central Arabian Gulf
12 Sep ECC and DC Drills
13 Sep ECC Drills

14-17 Sep Inport Doha, Qatar
17 Sep Southern Arabian Gulf; RAS with USS ROANOKE
18-22 Sep Inport Abu Dhabi, UAE
22 Sep Southern Arabian Gulf
23-25 Sep GULFEX V
24 Sep Opposed RAS with RFA BAY LEAF
26-27 Sep Central Arabian Gulf
26 Sep DC Drills
28-30 Sep Inport Mina Sulman, Bahrain
30 Sep-1 Oct Bahraini PASSEX
2-5 Oct Inport Al Jubayl, Saudi Arabia
5-6 Oct Saudi PASSEX
6 Oct RAS with USNS PECOS
7 Oct Central Arabian Gulf
8 Oct 76mm and Small Arms PACFIRE
8-11 Oct Inport Mina Sulman, Bahrain
11 Oct Southern Arabian Gulf; DC Drills
12 Oct Transit of Straits of Hormuz
13 Oct Gulf of Oman; Full Power and Economy Trials
14 Oct Northern Arabian Sea; ECC Drills
15-21 Oct Indian Ocean Transit
15 Oct RAS with USS ROANOKE
17 Oct Inchop to COMSEVENTHFLT
19 Oct RAS and VERTREP with USS ROANOKE
21 Oct ECC Drills
22 Oct Transit of Straits of Malacca
23 Oct Singaporean PASSEX

24-25 Oct South China Sea
24 Oct RAS with USS ROANOKE
25 Oct DC Drills
26 Oct Moor to a Buoy
26-31 Oct Inport NAVSTA Subic Bay, RP
31 Oct South China Sea
1-5 Nov Inport Hong Kong
6-25 Nov Pacific Ocean Transit
8-9 Nov ANNUALEX
11 Nov RAS with USS ROANOKE
13 Nov Inchop to COMTHIRDFLT
15 Nov Leap Frogs; RAS with USS ROANOKE; ECC Drills
18 Nov RAS with USS ROANOKE
20 Nov ECC Drills
22 Nov RAS with USS ROANOKE
25 Nov Moor Pier 7 NAVSTA Long Beach
25 Nov-31 Dec Holiday Leave and Upkeep Period
2 Dec "Dead Stick" Move to Pier 16 NAVSTA Long Beach
11-13 Dec Physical Readiness Test
16 Dec Awards Ceremony
18-20 Dec Physical Readiness Test
25 Dec Christmas
31 Dec New Year's Eve

USS GARY (FFG 51)
COMMAND HISTORY 1991
HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The calm before the Storm

1991 began quietly for USS GARY (FFG 51), with her crew enjoying the last few days of a holiday leave and upkeep period. But world events made it clear that this quiet would not last. A few months previously, Iraqi forces had occupied Kuwait, and the United Nations position was clear: the Iraqis would have to go. As GARY began workups and evaluations for her upcoming deployment, every man realized that this time, it just might be for the real thing.

This underlying sense of urgency was clear in the performance of GARY and her crew during Engineering and Damage Control training evaluations in the first two weeks of the new year. Both the Propulsion Examining Board and the Fleet Training Group visited GARY, and pronounced her material and personnel preparations for deployment on track and proceeding nicely. With these milestones met, GARY moved to NAVSHIPSYSENGSTA Port Hueneme for battery alignments and grooming of her Combat Systems suite.

On 15 January, while at Port Hueneme, GARY learned of the start of Operation Desert Storm. She reacted quickly to the possibility of action on the home front, stationing extra armed watches to protect the ship and crew against terrorist attack. Fortunately, this precaution was never needed, and, on 18 January, after testing the performance of her 76mm gun mount at sea, GARY returned to NAVSTA Long Beach to learn of the cease-fire and the sweeping United Nations victory.

Refreshed, rearmed, ready

After a final few weeks of furious preparation, GARY moved to San Diego on 11 February for Interim Refresher Training. Conducted by the Fleet Training Group, REFTRA is an intensive, all-hands, evolution in which literally every area of seagoing and warfighting skill is evaluated, upgraded and reevaluated. By its conclusion on 22 February, it was clear that GARY was ready to rejoin the fleet.

A short Restricted Availability with SIMA Long Beach and intensive review of Engineering Department records and preparations by COMDESRON NINE occupied the first half of March. On the 15th, GARY moved to NAVWEPSTA Seal Beach for a complete weapons onload, and then proceeded on to San Diego, where she embarked PEB examiners for a final four-day engineering training visit.

The ship then joined the newly-formed Battlegroup Foxtrot for several weeks of workups designed to integrate the individual units into a single team. GARY took advantage of the period to test her gun and missile mounts, and to continue training the engineers in watchstanding and casualty control. On 4 April, The ship returned to NAVSTA Long Beach.

On 15 April, the examiners from PEB returned for the Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE), an intensive review of all aspects of the ship's engineering materials and personnel. By its conclusion on 18 April, GARY's Engineering Department was certified as ready in all respects to deploy.

The focus then shifted to Combat Systems, as the ship's HARPOON missile launching and control systems were tested and certified. On 26 April, GARY completed HARPOON Tactical Qualification with flying colors. Later that day, COMDESRON NINE visited the ship and awarded GARY the Silver Anchor for retention excellence, reminding all hands that in spite of the arduous workups she had participated in, many sailors had never been more proud than they were on GARY.

Only one hoop remained for GARY and her crew: the Battlegroup Foxtrot Evaluation. This was conducted from 30 April to 2 May in the waters off southern California. For the first time, GARY was joined in action by all the members of the battlegroup, including the Navy's newest carrier, USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

On 9 May, GARY returned to NAVSTA Long Beach and began a brief Planning for Overseas Movement (POM) period, allowing the crew a few days to put their houses in order before the deployment. Combat Systems evaluations continued during POM, and concluded with successful completion of the Combat Systems Readiness Test on 24 May. After one last all-hands event, a ship's picnic on 25 May, GARY was ready.

Fire in the sky

Early on the morning of 28 May, with hundreds of relatives, friends and well-wishers looking on, GARY left Long Beach and headed south to join the battlegroup. On the way, she was met by Lonewolf 53 and 54, the Seahawk helicopters that would effectively extend GARY's range throughout the deployment. Once united, the group turned west. During the transit of the Pacific, GARY continued to train and drill heavily, in preparation for entering the Arabian Gulf, still officially a war zone. By mid-June, the crew was ready for a break: liberty in Subic Bay.

But Mother Nature had other plans. Just days before the ship was due to arrive in the Philippines, Mount Pinatubo, a volcano which had lain dormant for over four hundred years, erupted more violently than ever before. U. S. facilities near the volcano, like Clark Air Force Base, were damaged beyond use in a matter of hours. Forty miles away, the area surrounding Subic Bay Naval Base was subjected to a downpour of ash, which quickly accumulated to a thickness of up to six inches.

There was more disaster to come. A few days after the eruption, monsoon rains compounded the problem, soaking the ash which was covering every structure within a hundred miles of Mount Pinatubo. The added weight of the rainwater proved too much for all but the strongest buildings, and hundreds of houses, shops, clubs, warehouses and repair facilities collapsed overnight. By 17 June, the decision was made to evacuate all U. S. dependents from the area. Battlegroup Foxtrot joined Operation Fiery Vigil.

Women and children first

USS GARY, an Oliver Hazard Perry class frigate, was built to accommodate up to 210 men. Her junior crewmen live in three berthing compartments, each with 60 racks. Her galley works around the clock to have meals ready on time, and her two distilling plants produce enough fresh water to allow each man one short shower a day. Under normal circumstances, these various elements work together to ensure that each man has just what he needs, no more and no less.

Fiery Vigil tested the crew's ability to adapt to extremely unusual circumstances. In two day-long trips, GARY evacuated a total of 602 civilians, 27 dogs, and 8 cats, plus luggage, from Subic to Cebu. Berthing for the guests was provided by moving the crew out of two of their berthing compartments, and by moving both of the Seahawks out of their hangars onto the flight deck. Meals were served almost continually, and water rationing allowed the distilling plants to keep up with the suddenly doubled demand. The ship's band set up topside and played well into the night during each trip, giving the evacuees a chance to take their minds off the homes they had been forced to leave.

Just when a routine of sorts had been established for GARY and her crew, a new complication emerged. During her return to Subic after the first evacuation run, GARY received an emergency radio message from the Merchant Vessel OCEAN WIZARD, steaming several hundred miles to the northwest. One of her crewmen was suffering from heat stroke and required immediate medical attention. Although low on fuel from the high-speed run to Cebu, GARY began another high-speed run toward OCEAN WIZARD, to close the range for her helo. After several hours, the ship was close enough to dispatch Lonewolf 53, who completed the daring nighttime search and rescue mission by safely evacuating the seaman to Subic Bay. GARY then returned to Subic Bay herself, and calmly picked up a second group of evacuees. By the conclusion of Operation Fiery Vigil, elements from Battlegroup Foxtrot and other units had removed over 8000 civilians from harm's way.

Paradise found

After 26 straight days without mail or liberty, the crew was ready for a well-deserved break. Or two. So, on 26 June, GARY anchored in Singapore harbor for four days. The crew wasted no time in taking as much of the local scenery and color as the time would allow, returning to the ship each night to compare notes and make plans for the next day. On 30 June, GARY left Singapore and transited the treacherous Straits of Malacca, the world's busiest shipping channel. The crossing, done at night and during almost continuous rain squalls, left the crew exhausted. Fortunately, the morning of 1 July brought relief, as the skies cleared and GARY moored on the island of Penang, Malaysia.

Penang, a resort popular among visitors from Australia, New Zealand and Europe, as well as throughout Southeast Asia, proved to be just the ticket for GARY and her crew. Nearby beaches featured spectacular sunsets and affordable hotels, along with a nightlife that never seemed to end. Parasailing and water skiing were offered for those not content to merely watch, and tours and incredible shopping bargains rounded out the visit. There was even a country-and-western dance club which featured a huge Fourth of July celebration for the crew.

Back to business

Thoroughly recharged, GARY left Malaysia on 6 July and rejoined Battlegroup Foxtrot for the transit of the Indian Ocean. Daily damage control drills helped to bring the crew back up to speed, and prepare the men for Arabian Gulf operations. On 12 July, GARY set Condition 1A, a level of enhanced manning and readiness, and entered the Straits of Hormuz, officially joining Operation Desert Storm.

The ship proceeded to Mina Sulman, Bahrain, the hub of U. S. Navy operations in the gulf, for a week-long availability with USS SAMUEL GOMPERS.

After her TAV, GARY participated in various operations in the Northern and Central Arabian Gulf during the rest of the month of July.

On 30 July, GARY stepped back into her old role as escort, moving to the Southern Arabian Gulf and setting Condition 1A to escort USNS PECOS, USNS ANDREW J. HIGGINS and USS PYRO through the Straits of Hormuz. After a brief stop in Bahrain, she then returned to the Central Arabian Gulf.

On 10 August, the ship moored at Al Jubayl, Saudi Arabia, only 150 miles from the Kuwaiti border, to workup for a joint exercise with Saudi Naval forces. The exercise, conducted on 13 and 14 August, included a hazardous towing demonstration, executed flawlessly by GARY and her Saudi counterpart. Also in August, GARY participated in GULFEX IV, with units from several allied nations.

Showing the flag

September found GARY back in Bahrain, this time for an availability with the submarine tender USS L. Y. SPEAR. Following this, the ship entered the port of Doha, Qatar, for a rare U. S. diplomatic visit. The highlight of the trip was a reception for the U. S. Ambassador, hosted by GARY, during which former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali made a surprise appearance.

On 17 September, GARY left Doha and proceeded to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates for a four-day visit. By far the most Western of the Middle East nations, Abu Dhabi provided a welcome change of scenery for the crew, as well as a chance for GARY to show the colors.

GARY closed out the month of September with a return to Bahrain for joint exercises with the Bahraini Navy, and then returned to Al Jubayl on 2 October for a second visit and a repeat of the previous joint U. S.-Saudi exercise. A final stop in Bahrain from 8 to 11 October closed out GARY's tour in the gulf. On 12 October, she set Condition 1A for the last time and exited the Straits of Hormuz.

Eastbound and down

GARY paused for several days in the Gulf of Oman while the various elements of Battlegroup Foxtrot gathered for the return voyage. Taking advantage of the opportunity, she completed her Full Power and Economy Engineering Trials. Then, on 15 October, the battlegroup turned east and began the transit of the Indian Ocean.

On 22 October, the group entered a column formation and crossed through the Straits of Malacca. Upon exiting the straits, GARY joined units from the Singaporean Navy for a day of joint exercises. She then entered the South China Sea and continued to the west.

From 26 to 30 October, GARY was again in Subic Bay, the Philippines. In spite of the months that had passed, the effects of the eruption of Mount Pinatubo were still quite apparent. As a result, much of the area surrounding the base remained off-limits. Still, the crew took advantage of what amenities remained in this, their first real liberty port in months.

GARY followed her visit to Subic with a trip to Hong Kong, a first for many of her sailors. Shopping, tours and nightlife, along with side trips to the

Portuguese colony of Macau and to the People's Republic of China, made the visit a memorable one for all hands.

After Hong Kong, GARY continued westward, participating along the way in ANNJALEX with elements of the Japanese Naval Self-Defense Force. A number of typhoons in the Western Pacific made for several days of extreme pitching and rolling, and reminded crewmen that not everyone had their sealegs yet, even after five months at sea!

Home for the holidays

The transit of the Pacific Ocean continued without incident and, on 25 November, GARY made landfall with the sighting of the California coast. Just after sunrise, the two SH-60B Seahawk helicopters of HSL 43 DET 4 flew off for Naval Air Station North Island. The Long Beach-bound elements of Battlegroup Foxtrot, frigates GARY and INGRAHAM and oiler ROANOKE, formed a column with GARY in the lead.

As the ship neared the Naval Station, banners could be seen welcoming the group. Sailboats and tugs with water cannons shooting skyward escorted GARY to Pier 7, where, once again, hundreds of relatives, friends and well-wishers watched the ship move, this time toward home. Thanksgiving and Christmas with their loved ones still to be looked forward to, the crew closed out the year with a well-deserved holiday leave period.