



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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

IN REPLY REFER TO :

5750  
Ser FFG 51/CO  
06 Feb 96

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 5750.12 Series

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Chronological Summary  
(3) Historical Narrative

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (3) are forwarded.

*C. J. Hithon*  
C. J. HITHON

**USS GARY (FFG 51)  
COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION**

USS GARY, the namesake of Congressional Medal of Honor recipient CDR Donald Arthur Gary, is the forty-fifth ship of the Oliver Hazard Perry (FFG-7) class of guided missile frigates. The mission of *The Fighting Frigate* is to provide anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine protection for merchant and military convoys, carrier and logistics battle groups, and amphibious task forces, operating either independently or as part of a surface action group. She was built by Todd Pacific Shipyards Corporation, Los Angeles, California. Her keel was laid on 18 December 1982, she was christened on 19 November 1983, and was commissioned 17 November 1984.

The Commanding Officer has the ultimate authority, responsibility and accountability for the performance and welfare of the ship and her crew. Second in command, the Executive Officer implements policies and regulations as applicable to the ship and her mission. Each Department Head reports to the Commanding Officer via the Executive Officer.

USS GARY is under the administrative command of Commander, Destroyer Squadron TWO THREE, home ported in San Diego, CA.

**OPERATIONAL COMMANDER**

USS GARY was transferred from DESTROYER SQUADRON THIRTY THREE to DESTROYER SQUADRON TWENTY THREE on 01 October 1995.

**SHIP'S ORGANIZATION, 1995**

COMMANDING: CDR Edward J. Rogers III (6th Commanding Officer)  
Relieved by CDR Cary J. Hithon (7th Commanding Officer)

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: CDR Thomas H. Myers

**DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION**

OPERATIONS: LT [REDACTED]

NAVIGATOR / ON Division

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER / OC Division

FIRST LIEUTENANT / First Division

Encl (1)

COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER OFFICER / OI Division

COMBAT SYSTEMS: LT [REDACTED]

ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE OFFICER / CA Division

ORDNANCE OFFICER / CW Division

ELECTRONIC MATERIALS OFFICER / CE Division

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

MAIN PROPULSION ASSISTANT / M Division

DAMAGE CONTROL ASSISTANT / R Division

ELECTRICAL OFFICER / E Division

AUXILIARIES OFFICER / A Division

SUPPORT: LT [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

STOREKEEPERS / S-1 Division

FOOD SERVICES / S-2 Division

DISBURSING OFFICER / S-3 Division

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT / X Division

MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE COMMAND:

BCCM (SW) Michael Fulton

**USS GARY (FFG 51)  
COMMAND HISTORY 1995  
CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY**

09 JAN U/W SOCAL

13 JAN IPT SAN DIEGO

17 JAN COMMENCED SI2 AVAILABILITY  
COMMENCED ENGINEERING READINESS REVIEW (ERR)

01 FEB COMPLETED ERR

06 FEB COMMENCED TSTA II (INPORT)

13 FEB U/W SOCAL - TSTA II  
EMBARKED HSL 43 DET 3

17 FEB IPT SAN DIEGO

20 FEB U/W ENR PUERTO VALLARTA - TSTA II

24 FEB IPT PUERTO VALLARTA

25 FEB COMPLETED COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROJECT AT CASA HOGAR

28 FEB U/W ENR SAN DIEGO - TSTA II

03 MAR HSL 43 DET 3 FLY-OFF  
IPT SAN DIEGO

06 MAR COMMENCED CRUISE MISSILE TACTICAL QUALIFICATION

07 MAR COMPLETED CRUISE MISSILE TACTICAL QUALIFICATION

13 MAR COMMENCED INPORT FEP

14 MAR U/W SOCAL - FEP

16 MAR COMPLETED FEP  
IPT SAN DIEGO

23 MAR EXERCISE KERNEL BLITZ 95 PRE-SAIL CONFERENCE

30 MAR U/W SOCAL - KERNEL BLITZ  
HSL 43 DET 3 FLY-ON

31 MAR IPT SEAL BEACH - AMMUNITION ONLOAD  
U/W SOCAL - KERNEL BLITZ

05 APR KERNEL BLITZ MISSILE EXERCISE

Encl (2)

06 APR COMPLETED EXERCISE KERNEL BLITZ  
DLQ'S FOR HSL 41

07 APR IPT SAN DIEGO

12 APR DOCKED IN STEADFAST (AFDM 14)

14 APR GARY GOLF TOURNAMENT

18 APR MEFEX PHASE I

21 APR UN-DOCKED FROM STEADFAST  
U/W SOCAL - SEA TRIALS  
IPT SAN DIEGO

05 MAY CHANGE OF COMMAND  
CDR CARY J. HITHON RELIEVED CDR EDWARD J. ROGERS III AS  
COMMANDING OFFICER

08 MAY U/W SOCAL - MEFEX PHASE II

12 MAY END MEFEX PHASE II / COMMENCE JTFEX 95

15 MAY PLANE GUARD DUTY - USS NIMITZ (CVN 68)

19 MAY DLQ'S - HSL 41  
END JTFEX 95  
COMMENCE TRANSIT TO NORPAC FOR ORO SEA PHASE 95-1

23 MAY COMMENCE ORO SEA PHASE 95-1

26 MAY END ORO SEA PHASE 95-1  
INPORT VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

30 MAY U/W ENROUTE SEATTLE  
INPORT SEATTLE

01 JUN U/W ENROUTE SEAL BEACH  
COMMENCED IERA

04 JUN HSL 43 FLY-OFF  
COMPLETED IERA

05 JUN IPT SEAL BEACH FOR WEAPONS ONLOAD  
U/W ENROUTE SAN DIEGO  
IPT SAN DIEGO

06 JUN COMMENCED CSRR

13 JUN U/W SOCAL - SSRNM

14 JUN IPT SAN DIEGO

Encl (2)

16 JUN COMPLETED CSRR  
 19 JUN COMMENCED SURFACE LINE WEEK 1995  
 26 JUL FAST CRUISE (IPT SAN DIEGO)  
 27 JUL U/W SOCIAL - FAMILY DAY CRUISE  
 IPT SAN DIEGO  
 31 JUL U/W - COMMENCE WESTPAC 1995-1996  
 COMMENCED MEFEX PHASE III  
 HSL 43 DET 3 FLY-ON  
 01 AUG CONDUCTED BURIAL AT SEA  
 06 AUG MISSILEX - BARKING SANDS MISSILE RANGE, HAWAII  
 07 AUG IPT PEARL HARBOR  
 08 AUG U/W ENROUTE SINGAPORE  
 24 AUG CROSSED THE EQUATOR  
 25 AUG IPT SINGAPORE  
 30 AUG U/W ENROUTE PHUKET, THAILAND  
 31 AUG IPT PHUKET, THAILAND  
 04 SEP U/W ENROUTE BAHRAIN  
 12 SEP STRAIT OF HORMUZ TRANSIT  
 13 SEP IPT BAHRAIN - TURNOVER W/ USS INGRAHAM  
 19 SEP U/W - ESCORT ARG ISO OPERATION EAGER MACE  
 23 SEP COMMENCED EXERCISE INDIGO DESERT  
 ESCORT MPF MV LOUIS J HAUGE, JR  
 25 SEP SUFFERED CABLEWAY FIRE IN NR 2 SSDG ENCLOSURE. HEAVY  
 ELECTRICAL DAMAGE RESULTS. SUPPORT PROVIDED BY USS  
 TEMPEST, USS CYCLONE, USS HARRY W HILL, QATARI COAST  
 GUARD.  
 26 SEP ENROUTE BAHRAIN - UNDER TOW FROM USNS CATAWBA  
 27 SEP IPT BAHRAIN - COMMENCED REPAIRS TO NR 2 SSDG ENCLOSURE  
 08 OCT COMMENCED EXERCISE NEON FALCON - BAHRAIN  
 CONDUCTED DAMAGE CONTROL TRAINING/DEMO FOR BAHRAIN  
 AMIRI NAVY

Encl (2)

20 OCT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY VISITS

28 OCT UNDERWAY - CENTRAL ARABIAN GULF  
MPS MODLOC PROTECTION SHIP

03 NOV REPAIRS TO NR 2 SSDG AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT COMPLETE

10 NOV INPORT BAHRAIN

12 NOV UNDERWAY ENROUTE DOHA, QATAR

13 NOV INPORT DOHA, QATAR

15 NOV RECEPTION HELD ONBOARD FOR US CONSUL GENERAL AND GUESTS

17 NOV UNDERWAY ENROUTE CENTRAL ARABIAN GULF  
MPS MODLOC PROTECTION SHIP

28 NOV CONDUCTED GOOD ORDER AND DISCIPLINE STANDOWN

04 DEC INPORT RAS AL KHAIMAH (MINA SAQR), UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

06 DEC CROWN PRINCE OF RAS AL KHAIMAH VISITS

09 DEC UNDERWAY ENROUTE CENTRAL ARABIAN GULF  
MPS ESCORT SHIP

12 DEC MPS MODLOC PATROL

16 DEC INPORT BAHRAIN

18 DEC CONDUCTED TURNOVER WITH USS REUBEN JAMES (FFG 57)

19 DEC UNDERWAY ENROUTE PHATTAYA, THAILAND

20 DEC STRAIT OF HORMUZ TRANSIT

23 DEC OUTCHOP FIFTH FLEET / INCHOP SEVENTH FLEET

28 DEC STRAIT OF MALACCA TRANSIT

30 DEC ANCHORED PHATTAYA, THAILAND

Encl (2)

**USS GARY (FFG 51)  
COMMAND HISTORY 1995  
HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

USS GARY started the new year with tremendous confidence. The latter portion of 1994 saw her successfully clear several major hurdles in the inter-deployment cycle, leaving only a few more to complete in the six months remaining prior to the deployment.

January was a busy month. The crew returned from a two-week holiday stand-down and immediately commenced a repair availability and the Engineering Readiness Review. Both involved major efforts on the part of all hands, bringing the ship's material readiness to peak condition for the tough schedule ahead.

February brought the completion of the repair availability and the Engineering Readiness Review with the commencement of the Total Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) close on its heels. The first week of TSTA was conducted inport San Diego. The next portion was completed during the transit to and from one of GARY's favorite ports - Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Two weeks of intense training were broken-up by a long weekend in the sunny resort town.

While in Puerto Vallarta, most of the crew simply enjoyed the weather and a break from the busy underway routine. There was much to see and do - sport-fishing and beach volleyball were favorites. Many of ship's company also spent some of their hard-earned liberty working at a local orphanage which first benefitted from GARY's efforts during last year's visit. The Casa Hogar Home received a new clothes dryer as well as bicycles, clothing, and toys for the children, all hand-delivered by GARY crewmen who spent the rest of the day hard at work performing general repair and clean-up around the home. In addition to their time, the crew donated over four-hundred dollars by "passing the hat" prior to



arrival. This money was donated to the home and would go to purchase some needed supplies.

The visit to Puerto Vallarta was a welcome respite, but after putting to sea, the hectic pace of TSTA II was upon the ship again. GARY performed as expected and by the time she arrived back in San Diego, she was evaluated satisfactory in all areas. As a result of this, GARY skipped the TSTA III phase which most ships must complete and made preparations to proceed directly to the final obstacle - the Final Evaluation Period (FEP), scheduled for mid-March.

The interim time was just as busy. The second week in March brought another test to GARY's crew. The Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification (CMTQ) began on 6 March and was successfully completed in just two days. GARY's Harpoon missile teams showed their mettle - they were evaluated by the Afloat Training Group as one of the finest teams in the fleet.

The very next week GARY's Final Evaluation Period began - one day in port, two more at sea. This phase was the final in GARY's pre-deployment cycle, and the crew again brought outstanding skill and flawless equipment to the playing field. This proved not surprisingly to be a winning combination as GARY's FEP was successfully completed in just three days vice the five days normally required.

With all required inspections and evaluations now out of the way, GARY concentrated on fine-tuning equipment and skills and making herself truly battle-ready. The first opportunity to do this was not far away as Kernel Blitz '95 commenced on the thirtieth of March.

Kernel Blitz was the major exercise for Pacific Fleet surface, air, and Marine forces in 1995. The exercise involved many complex phases revolving around a large-scale amphibious

landing at Oceanside, California. GARY was involved as part of a three-ship Surface Action Group along with USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54) and USS JOHN YOUNG (DD 973). The SAG spent three days in intense anti-submarine warfare exercises, successfully prosecuting sub-surface threats in coordination with air assets from carriers and air-stations in the area.

The crown jewel of the exercise was a coordinated anti-air defense exercise with the SAG providing area defense at sea in tandem with Marine air-defense battalions ashore. Many watchful eyes from the Navy and civilian world watched as eight separate threat profiles were presented to the air-defense group - with all eight successfully defeated. GARY played her role to perfection - engaging two threat aircraft and firing four missiles - with both engagements unqualified successes. Prior to returning to port, GARY conducted nine hours of helo-deck landing qualifications for the fleet replacement squadron, HSL 41.

A proud ship sailed into San Diego on 7 April where she would spend the next month completing repairs. For these repairs, GARY would visit familiar territory. A faulty fin-stabilizer forced GARY to dry-dock in STEADFAST, (AFDM 14) for the second time in less than a year.

The dry-docking was completed on 12 April and once out of the water, repairs began immediately. While in dock, the Operations and Combat Systems teams began the first phase of MEFEX, working with their counterparts from USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54) and USS HARRY W. HILL (DD 986) with whom GARY would be operating extensively in the months to come.

A talented engineering department brought swift completion to repairs on the fin-stabilizer, and on 21 April GARY un-docked from STEADFAST and proceeded directly to sea for operational testing. All repairs proved to be effective, and that evening GARY moored

at Naval Station San Diego. Preparations had already begun for the next big event - Change of Command.

On 5 May, Commander Cary J. Hithon relieved Captain Edward J. Rogers III as GARY's seventh Commanding Officer. Commander Hithon came to GARY after attending the National War College. He previously commanded USS ENGAGE (MSO 433) and USS ILLUSIVE (MSO 448). Captain Rogers moved on to the staff of the NATO Military Committee in Brussels, Belgium.

Commander Hithon had little time to get a feel for his new command before getting GARY underway. On 8 May, GARY commenced one of the longest non-deployment underway periods in her history. It began with MEFEX Phase II, where GARY and her deployment mates, USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54) and USS HARRY W. HILL (DD 986), were put through their paces by COMDESRON 31 in preparation for operations in the Arabian Gulf. The week was action-packed featuring gunnery, boarding and maneuvering exercises. Every aspect of GARY's preparations were tested, and again she proved herself ready in every area.

Immediately upon completion of MEFEX, GARY, CURTIS WILBUR, and HARRY W. HILL were placed under command of COMPHIBRON 7 for JTFEX, a large-scale exercise involving not only GARY's three-ship Surface Action Group, but also an amphibious landing force with an Marine Expeditionary Unit, and other air, surface, and subsurface assets. An incredibly demanding exercise, GARY excelled in the demanding environment of multi-role operations, acting as warfare commander for several key areas, and conducting surface and subsurface actions as well as boarding operations.

Upon the completion of JTFEX, GARY was detached and headed north to act as a hostile force opposing Canadian ships for ORO SEA PHASE 95-1. GARY, USS SIDES (FFG 14) and USS SALT LAKE CITY (SSN 724) were matched against HMCS CALGARY, HMCS ANNAPOLIS, and HMCS KOOTENAY for four days of battle exercises off the coast of

Victoria Island. Again, the ships flexed all areas and GARY enjoyed great success throughout the exercise. After nearly three weeks at sea, the crew looked forward to some time ashore. Victoria provided a relaxed atmosphere and some interesting sights, and a grateful crew enjoyed it all.

Seattle was the next stop for GARY. A beautiful transit through the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound brought GARY to Seattle in time to allow the crew some more liberty before the transit south. In addition to some sight-seeing in Seattle, GARY welcomed aboard a team from Destroyer Squadron 33 who would conduct an Engineering Readiness Assessment (IERA) on GARY's transit south to Seal Beach.

The IERA went smoothly, as the engineering department had their moment in the spotlight after being behind the scenes in the previous week's exercises. Programs and operations were all graded satisfactory, and the inspection team debarked once the ship arrived at Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station to complete her pre-deployment weapons loadout.

Loadout completed, GARY headed south to see San Diego again, nearly a month after she had left. The upcoming deployment was only seven weeks away, and the crew looked forward to getting as much time with their families as possible before the ship departed again.

On June 6th, a comprehensive review of the material and operational condition of the ships combat systems suite began. Called the Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR), it would give a hard look at the ships warfighting capabilities, a key event considering the upcoming deployment. The underway portion was conducted on 13-14 June and included the Ship's Self Radiated Noise Measurement (SSRNM) and an operational test of the SLQ-32(V)5 system.

Gary was back inport on 14 June and the CSRR was completed on 16 June. 19 June brought about an event which concentrated more on

the morale of men rather than the condition of equipment. Surface Line Week 1995 began and the GARY's competitors were ready to show their mettle. Competing in just about every event, GARY held its own with First Place finishes in Volleyball and Physical Excellence, and Seconds in Football and the 10k Run. Everyone had a great time - it was a welcome break from the hectic pace of pre-deployment preparations. The next event to commence was the pre-deployment stand-down, a time where most of the crew had the chance to take some leave and spend some time at home with family and friends.

The standown ended 24 July, and on the 26th a Fast Cruise was conducted at Naval Station San Diego to prepare the ship for the underway time to come after having been inport for the past four weeks.

The 27th brought about the ship's pre-deployment sea-trials. Advantage was taken of this underway time, however, as the ship combined it with a Family Day Cruise, allowing loved ones of GARY's crew to get a taste of what life at sea is like. Family and friends experienced some operations at sea, and enjoyed a flight-deck cookout during the day underway. GARY pulled back in to Naval Station, San Diego that evening where she would stay until the deployment commenced four days later.

July 31st marked a day all had looked forward to with mixed emotions. Family and friends would be missed, but the excitement of a six-month operational phase was becoming evident as well. A teary farewell was given at Pier 4 where GARY slipped her moorings at ten a.m. and began her six-month journey. No time was given for reflection on the morning as the fast-paced schedule of MEFEX Phase III began just outside of San Diego Harbor. The week-long transit to Pearl Harbor would feature ship-maneuvering, helo operations and underway replenishments. A Burial at Sea was conducted on 01 August for some shipmates and their loved-ones. The transit concluded with a successful Missile Exercise at the Barking Sands Missile Range on 06 August and by morning of 07 August, the ship was moored in Pearl Harbor.

After a brief stop in Pearl Harbor for fuel and some additional operations briefings, the ship was underway again, bound for Singapore and the first true "liberty port" of the deployment. During the transit, the three-ship surface action group honed their proficiency in all areas of operations, conducting various drills and training packages on a daily basis. On 24 August, the ship was welcomed into King Neptune's realm, crossing the equator and cleansing many un-initiated "pollywogs" who emerged as shell-backs.

Singapore rose on the horizon on 25 August, and after the ship dropped anchor, it proved to be an exciting port for a sea-weary crew, who enjoyed its sights and sounds until 30 August. Underway from Singapore on 30 August, it took only one day to reach the next port of Phuket, Thailand. Again, the three-ship group anchored out and the crew streamed ashore to enjoy the beautiful beaches and relax in the sun. The ship remained in Phuket until 4 September.

On 4 September, GARY and her companions weighed anchor and began making way for the Arabian Gulf. The training amongst the ships continued, and all were ready for the Straits of Hormuz transit which took place on 12 September. Now in the Gulf, the ship sailed for one more day to reach Bahrain, where the turnover for duties in the region would begin with the USS INGRAHAM (FFG 61).

The turnover in Bahrain took place until 19 September, on which day GARY proceeded to sea to escort the Amphibious Readiness Group consisting of USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH ), USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45), USS MOUNT VERNON (LSD 39), AND USS JUNEAU (LPD 11) to Kuwait in support of Operation Eager Mace. The escort operations took several days and introduced the ship to the balmy air and waters associated with the Northern Arabian Gulf for the first time. After this short operation, GARY proceeded south again, headed for Qatar and Exercise Indigo Desert 95-2.

The first event of the exercise was the escort of MV Corporal Louis J Hauge JR, a Maritime Pre-Positioning Force (MPF) ship which would provide the equipment required for the ground portion of the exercise. GARY and the other surface participants in the exercise, USS HARRY W HILL (DD 986), USS CYCLONE (PC 1), and USS TEMPEST (PC 2), proceeded south through the gulf in their escort role. The exercise began on the late night of 24 September, when the group engaged Qatari patrol boats in a night, long-range surface engagement. The escorting American Forces defeated their Qatari counterparts and successfully cleared the way for the MV HAUGE to proceed into Qatari waters.

The morning of 25 September would bring more excitement than most people could imagine. The ship had completed escort duties and the MV HAUGE, HARRY W HILL, CYCLONE, and TEMPEST had all proceeded into port when disaster struck the GARY.

Late in the morning, the crew was preparing to enter Doha, Qatar for the inport portion of Exercise Indigo Desert, when the ship suffered a fire in the number two Ship's Service Diesel Generator (SSDG) Enclosure. The fire flashed quickly and soon the ship set General Quarters in order to better combat the blaze. The fire was a stubborn one, and initially it defeated GARY's installed fire-fighting systems, forcing fire-parties to enter the space and fight the fire with water and foam. The fire resisted all means of extinguishment, and consistently re-flashed with the intense heat forcing the fire-parties to evacuate the space several times. Assistance was called for and arrived quickly, with USS CYCLONE and USS TEMPEST getting underway on short notice from Doha and USS HARRY W HILL providing an assistance team which arrived on vessels of the Qatari Coast Guard. By the time assistance arrived however, GARY fire-parties had extinguished the blaze and were proceeding with overhaul of the fire.

Physically exhausted, the spirits of the crew remained high and soon vital galley and berthing electricity was restored. The fire had begun in and burned a vital cableway running through the SSDG Enclosure, and had destroyed numerous vital cables which provided power to and from equipment all over the ship. This meant that GARY could not again get underway under her own power. Early in the morning on 26 September, USNS CATAWBA arrived to rig a tow and bring GARY back to Bahrain where the damage could be assessed and repairs completed.

GARY and CATAWBA proceeded into Bahrain on 27 September, and once tied up, GARY began a long phase of troubleshooting and repair. While the equipment may not have been in top shape, the crew kept busy in a variety of areas. The extra inport time was taken advantage of by all departments, all of whom took the time to get their spaces and personnel in top operating condition.

The world outside GARY did not stand still while her repairs were conducted, however, and she became involved in several additional commitments. Exercise Neon Falcon began with Bahrain on 8 October, and GARY was a player conducting Damage Control and Search and Rescue Training for the Bahrain Amiri Navy (BAN). In addition, GARY became the host ship for thirty members of the BAN who took the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the ship, as the BAN would be purchasing a Perry Class FFG and bringing it home early in 1997. Several members of GARY's wardroom were tapped to fill roles around the region. Three officers stood watch in the communications center for Exercise Neon Falcon, coordinating the at-sea portions of the exercise from the shore. One officer was dispatched back to Qatar to act as the Naval Liaison Officer for the Combined Joint Task Force conducting the land portion of Exercise Indigo Desert. Also detached to support this portion of Exercise Indigo Desert was HSL 43 Det 3, supporting the Marine Corps mission with both SH 60B helicopters.



Support from shore facilities in Bahrain was excellent, and teamed with outstanding work from the crew, GARY's repairs progressed at a steady pace. On 20 October, the Honorable John Dalton, Secretary of the Navy, arrived for a visit. In his brief time on board, he praised the crew for their efforts in combatting the difficult fire.

GARY was able to work some difficult repair issues and was underway again on 28 October. After a day of equipment testing, the repairs were determined to be successful, only a few minor items remained to make the equipment full operational. GARY was once again mission capable. No time was spared as HSL 43 Det 3 flew aboard that afternoon, anxious to begin operations aboard ship again after a month ashore. GARY relieved USS FIFE as the MPS MODLOC Protection ship on 29 October, and was soon again immersed in Arabian Gulf operations, to the relief of a crew who for the past month had been looking forward to doing their part in the region.

On 3 November, GARY's crew completed all repairs to NR 2 SSDG, cleared the casualty report, and finally put the fire and its associated damage behind them. GARY executed duties as the MPS MODLOC Protection ship until 10 November when she proceeded back into Bahrain for a brief visit.

After a two days in Bahrain, GARY headed south, again bound for Qatar and the port of Doha. Arriving on 13 November, the crew quickly learned how friendly the local expatriate community is in Doha as many were hosted to dinner and tours by Americans working and living in the Qatari Capital. GARY quickly returned the hospitality by hosting a reception onboard for the American Consul General and his guests. On 17 November, GARY bid farewell to new friends in Doha and proceeded back to the Central Arabian Gulf to again perform duties as the MPS MODLOC Protection Ship.

The next port of call was Ras Al Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates on 4 December. A port rarely visited by U.S. ships, the crew enjoyed some of the authentic nuances offered by an Arab city not greatly influenced by Western culture. For those who found this a bit on the dull side, daily bus trips were taken to Dubai where all could experience the wide range of goods and services available in this very modern city. While in Ras Al Khaimah, the Crown Prince of the Emirate was hosted to lunch aboard and returned the favor by inviting the Captain and members of the wardroom to a local football match. All in all, it was an excellent port visit. GARY departed Ras Al Khaimah on 9 December to conduct her last scheduled operations in the Gulf before departing for home.

These operations included escort of MPS ships to and from Jebel Ali in the United Arab Emirates, and concluded, appropriately enough, with duty as MPS MODLOC Protection ship. On 16 December, GARY arrived in Bahrain for the final time of the deployment. Some final equipment offload and turnover with the Officers and crew of the USS REUBEN JAMES (FFG 57) marked the completion of GARY's Middle East Force commitments for 1995. All that was left now was the trip home.

The trip home began on 19 December, when GARY and USS HARRY W HILL departed Bahrain heading for home. The ships passed through the Strait of Hormuz for the final time of the deployment on 20 December, and transferred Operational Control from Commander Fifth Fleet to Commander Seventh Fleet on 23 December.

Christmas at sea brought about some strong emotions, but the separation from friends and family was made a little more bearable by the camaraderie of shipmates, and the thought of being home in just over one month. The final port visit of the year began on 30 December when GARY and HARRY W HILL arrived in Phattaya, Thailand for a few days of relaxation and to celebrate the New Year.

It had been a busy, challenging, and productive year for the GARY and her crew. Though the year had drawn to a close, GARY was still a ways from home, and despite all that had happened, the thought of being home again was foremost in everyone's mind.

USS GARY (FFG-51)  
FREEDOMS FOREMOST GUARDIAN  
BY EWC(SW) (SEL) [REDACTED]

USS Gary, named after the WWII Congressional Medal of Honor recipient CDR Donald Arthur Gary was built by Todd Pacific Shipyards Corporation, Los Angeles, California. Her keel was laid on 18 December 1982, she was christened on 19 November 1983 and commissioned 17 November 1984. She is the forty-fifth ship of the Oliver Hazard Perry (FFG-7) class guided missile frigates. The "Fighting Frigates" mission is as it always has been, to provide a multi-mission AAW, ASW, and ASUW capability to independent, convoy, amphibious, and battle group operations.

These facts and many more can easily be attained through the simple research of historical files. What cannot be so easily appreciated is the outstanding manner in which Gary and her crew have not only persevered but excelled throughout her history.

1200 annual HELO deck operations, REFTRE, OPPE, TSTA, READIEX, INSURV, RIMPAC, COMPTUEX, inspections, certifications, operations and a multitude of evaluations are but a few of the evolutions which comprise Gary's annual history. Through out this high tempo existence Gary and her crew have managed to set the standard for others to follow. Through training, pride and professionalism Gary has seen her way through 9 Western Pacific Deployments, rescued civilians in the wake of a volcano, represented the United States in two Persian Gulf Wars and battled a fire which threatened her life. Though these actions and the many more to follow, the USS Gary has engraved her name in history as "FREEDOM'S FOREMOST GUARDIAN".