



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5757
Ser FFG51/CO
15 Jan 98

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
(4) Supporting Documents

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are forwarded.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Diefenbach", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

A. L. DIEFENBACH

Copy to:
PAO
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**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 air, surface, and submarine protection for merchant and military convoys, carriers, logistics battle groups, and amphibious task forces, operating either independently or as part of a surface action group. 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 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 Deigo, CA.

SHIP'S ORGANIZATION, 1997

COMMANDING: CDR A.L. Diefenbach (8th Commanding Officer)

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: LCDR Robert A. Bonner
Relieved by LCDR Brian T. Smith

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

COMBAT SYSTEMS: LCDR [REDACTED]

Ordnance Officer (CW Division)

Electronic Materials Officer (CE Division)

Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer (CA Division)

OPERATIONS: LT [REDACTED]
Relieved by LT [REDACTED]

First Lieutenant (First Division)

Combat Information Center Officer (OI Division)

Communications Officer (OC Division)

NAVIGATOR/ADMIN OFFICER:

LT [REDACTED]

Relieved by LTJG [REDACTED]

ENGINEERING:

LT [REDACTED]

Relieved by LT [REDACTED]

Main propulsion Assistant (M Division)

Damage Control Assistant (R Division)

Auxiliaries Officer (A Division)

Electrical Officer (E Division)

SUPPLY:

LT [REDACTED]

Storekeepers (S-1 Division)

Food Services (S-2 Division)

Disbursing Officer (S-3 Division)

MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE COMMAND:

BMCM Fulton

Relieved by STSCM Smith

Encl (1)

**USS GARY (FFG 51)
COMMAND HISTORY 1997
CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY**

01 JAN	IPT SAN DIEGO
21 JAN	U/W TAILORED SHIPS TRAINING AVAILABILITY TWO (TSTA II)
24 JAN	IPT SAN DIEGO
27 JAN	U/W TSTA II
01 FEB	IPT SAN DIEGO
19 FEB	U/W ENGINEERING CERTIFICATION (ECERT)
21 FEB	IPT SAN DIEGO
05 MAR	U/W TSTA III
08 MAR	IPT SAN DIEGO
10 MAR	U/W TSTA III
14 MAR	IPT SAN DIEGO
18 MAR	U/W FINAL EVALUATION PERIOD (FEP)/ CRUISE MISSILE TACTICAL QUALIFICATION (CMTQ)
11 APR	IPT SAN DIEGO
14 APR	U/W SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, DECK LANDING QUALS/ SHIP'S SELF RADIATED NOISE MEASUREMENTS (SSRNM)
18 APR	IPT SAN DIEGO, FUSS MOD INSTALATION/ GALLEY RIP-OUT & RE-WORK
07 MAY	ORDO CHECKS ONBOARD
10 MAY	IPT SAN DIEGO
12 MAY	VENTILATION & SURVEY TEAM

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17 MAY SHIP EXPLOSIVE SAFETY INSPECTION (SESI)
02 JUN U/W ENROUTE PORTLAND OREGON
04 JUN IPT ASTORIA, OREGON
05 JUN U/W ENROUTE PORTLAND OREGON
05 JUN IPT PORTLAND OREGON
09 JUN U/W ENROUTE SAN DIEGO
13 JUN ULM-4 SOCAL OPERATION AREA
13 JUN IPT SAN DIEGO
15 JUN ONLOAD NORTH ISLAND CALIFORNIA, HARPOON MISSILES
16 JUN IPT MIDDLE EAST FORCE EXERCISE (MEFEX) PHASE I
23 JUN IPT SAN DIEGO
24 JUN INSURV
30 JUN U/W MISSILE EXERCISE SOCAL OPERATION AREA
02 JUL IPT SAN DIEGO
07 JUL MIDDLE EAST FORCE EXERCISE (MEFEX) PHASE II
14 JUL U/W ENROUTE SEAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA
15 JUL AMMUNITION ONLOAD SEAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA
16 JUL U/W ENROUT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
16 JUL U/W SOCAL, DEPENDENTS CRUISE
17 JUL IPT SAN DIEGO
16 JUL FIRST PERIOD PRE-OVERSEAS MOVEMENT LEAVE
31 JUL SECOND PERIOD PRE-OVERSEAS MOVEMENT LEAVE

19 AUG U/W MIDDLE EAST FORCE (MEF) DEPLOYMENT, MEFEX PHASE III,
ENROUTE PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII

25 AUG IPT PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII

26 AUG U/W ENROUTE SINGAPORE

30 AUG INCHOP SEVENTH FLEET

10 SEP PASSING EXERCISE WITH GERMAN NAVY

12 SEP IPT SINGAPORE

17 SEP U/W ENROUTE PHUKET, THAILAND

18 SEP ANCHORED PHUKET, THAILAND

24 SEP U/W ENROUTE MUSCAT, OMAN

30 SEP INCHOP FIFTH FLEET

01 OCT IPT MUSCAT, OMAN MIDDLE EAST FORCE TURNOVER WITH USS
RENTZ

03 OCT U/W ENROUTE BAHRAIN

04 OCT STRAIT OF HORMUZ TRANSIT

07 OCT IPT BAHRAIN

12 OCT U/W FOR MARITIME INTERDICATION OPERATONS (MIO) IN THE
NORTH ARABIAN GULF

13 OCT MIO, NORTH ARABIAN GULF

28 OCT ENROUTE JABEL ALI, U.A.E.

29 OCT IPT JABEL ALI, U.A.E.

07 NOV U/W FOR MARITIME INTERDICITON OPERATIONS IN THE NORTH
ARABIAN GULF

08 NOV MIO, NORTH ARABIAN GULF

11 NOV ENROUTE BAHRAIN
12 NOV IPT BAHRAIN
15 NOV U/W NEON FALCON EXERCISE
18 NOV IPT BAHRAIN
23 NOV U/W NEON FALCON EXERCISE
24 NOV IPT BAHRAIN
26 NOV U/W ENROUTE DUBAI, U.A.E.
27 NOV IPT DUBAI, U.A.E.
01 DEC U/W FOR MIO, NORTH ARABIAN GULF
02 DEC MIO, NORTH ARABIAN GULF
14 DEC ENROUTE DUBAI, U.A.E.
15 DEC IPT DUBAI, U.A.E.
21 DEC U/W FOR MIO, NORTH ARABIAN GULF
22 DEC MIO, NORTH ARABIAN GULF
30 DEC IPT BAHRAIN

**USS GARY (FFG 51)
COMMAND HISTORY 1997
HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

USS GARY started the new year amidst a rigorous training cycle. Tailored Ships Training Availability (TSTA) ONE had just finished and the month of January meant GARY was ready to move on to the next level of training. TSTA II brought this challenge to the GARY crew and all areas including operations, weapons employment, navigation, and engineering drills were evaluated.

With the conclusion of TSTA II, GARY's next major inspections were around the corner come February 19. Engineering Certification (ECERT) was the high priority of the entire GARY crew. ECERT was another major stepping stone in preparation for the upcoming MEF deployment. After one long week and many long hours of Engineering Casualty Control and General Quarters Drills, program inspections, and watch stander evaluations GARY received a passing grade and a ticket to the next level of training--TSTA III.

The month of March was the time for the GARY crew to demonstrate what they had been training for many months. At the TSTA III stage, the crew was ready to handle every evolution like the professionals they were. From conducting Maritime Interception Operations (MIO) to Integrated Training Team drills, GARY showed that she was fully up to deployment standards. The crew went through one last inspection called Final Evaluation Period (FEP) as well as Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification (CMTQ). With the successful completion of FEP, the TSTA Team considered GARY completely capable to get underway without them. With this license to freely navigate the high seas, GARY could now see Deployment on the horizon.

April brought Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR). Combat Systems Department had to effectively demonstrate their ability to maintain and operate their equipment. A close inspection of all systems, manning, qualification and technical skills resulted in a satisfactory grade for Combat Systems. Now fully operational and technically proficient, GARY was one step closer to being a fully deployable unit. The end of the month brought major upgrades with the beginning of the Flexible Universal Storage System (FUSS) Modification and re-work of CWI cooling and the galley, and ship's force overhaul of the Close In Weapons System (CIWS).

May brought the end of the aggressive training cycle. Attention shifted to deployment preparations. Engineers had a ventilation survey team to inspect the ships cooling and ventilation system. Various discrepancies were corrected and GARY's ventilation system was found to be in good order. Combat Systems Department successfully completed their Ships Explosive Safety Inspection. A thorough survey of all ammunition stowage and handling facilities was conducted and the few discrepancies noted were immediately corrected. First Division readied both helo hangers for the embarkation of HSL-43 detachment. By the end of May, GARY had a fully equipped helicopter detachment ready for the up coming deployment. All of the GARY crew worked hard

readying the ship for its upcoming port visit to Portland, Oregon. When not involved with deployment preparations and inspections, the GARY's Sailors were busy preserving and painting the ship's topside and cleaning and polishing the inside to show the hundreds of visitors the high quality and standards of the GARY crew. The completion of the FUSS Mod significantly improved GARY's combat capability, making her capable of employing an armed helo. The re-worked galley allowed the Supply Department to improve the food service for the crew.

The month of June saw GARY's first port visit of 1997. GARY got underway June 02 for a five day transit to attend the Portland Rose Festival in Portland, Oregon. The transit to Portland, Oregon gave the crew its first unobserved underway period and everyone was eager to demonstrate their watchstanding competency. GARY's first stop was in Astoria Oregon where the GARY crew had one night of liberty prior to an eight hour Sea and Anchor Detail transit up the Columbia River the next morning. Underway came early for the GARY Sailors as well as the 200 Portland area residents as guests on board for the ride up the Columbia River. The transit was enjoyed by all aboard, and GARY crew members had the opportunity to meet many interesting people from the Portland area. GARY was greeted by much fan fair as they rounded the last bend in the Wilamette River and the skyline of Portland came into view. The Portland Rose Festival was a memorable experience for everyone. The crew fully anticipated a good time and the Portland Rose Festival proved to be just the place for entertainment. Situated right on the riverside, the festival was an ideal blend of carnival atmosphere and U.S. Navy presence. GARY held tours with over 800 visitors received on board to see what a modern U.S. Naval warship was all about.

Prior to pulling into San Diego, June 13, GARY conducted a perfect anchoring evolution, followed by a ULM-4 range run for the SLQ-32 system. GARY received a perfect score for this emitter evaluation run. Returning to port San Diego GARY continued her preparations for deployment. MEFEX Phase I started in mid June. This was GARY's first coordination with the HARRY W HILL and BENFOLD. Operational procedures were also discussed and planned during this phase. Previous deployers also briefed several lectures to aid in the MEF's understanding of what to expect while operating in the Arabian Gulf. With this information, the GARY Middle East Force could effectively plan and prepare for a successful deployment in August.

July saw Combat System flexed for the ultimate exercise. GARY was part of a four ship Missile Exercise where we fired four Standard Missiles. The MK13 Guided Missile Launcher System performed flawlessly during the two dual salvo engagements. Each engagement was a success, with skin-to-skin kills on the second missile of each salvo. So much for recoverable drones. With a successful missile shoot on the books GARY headed into the month of July with a fighting spirit.

MEFEX Phase II got underway after the 4th of July holiday. This training phase saw a higher level of coordinated operations. Boarding procedures were perfected. Combat tracking and threat level assessment was conducted with live air support. The helicopter detachment HSL-43 experience it first integrations with GARY's Combat Systems and received Deck Landing Qualification (DLQ) for both day and night. All turned out with positive results with a well earned sense of readiness amongst the GARY crew.

GARY's next stage was to get her full mission ammunition loadout at Seal Beach, California. The entire evolution went perfectly and GARY was fully armed and outfitted in just one day. Now

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completely a true fighting frigate, GARY headed back to San Diego. The following day friends and family were treated to an afternoon cruise on the now fully equipped, deployment ready USS GARY. The crew was anxious to show its guests their level of readiness achieved over the past eighteen months in preparation for the upcoming deployment.

The end of July was the last scheduled maintenance availability prior to deployment and the beginning of Pre Overseas Movement (POM) leave period. With maintenance availability and POM leave leading into August, GARY was only days away from deployment with all planning on schedule.

August was the month of much anticipation and anxiety. With a six month deployment around the corner the process of preparing good-byes for family and friends was eased by the installment of a new e-mail system. With personal accounts for every Sailor, the crew looked forward to the luxury of messaging family and friends on a daily basis underway. No matter when or where GARY was in the world, for the next six months it was a true comfort for every Sailor to know that he could talk with loved ones on a daily basis and expect a reply within a twenty-four hours. The GARY e-mail system was a tremendous improvement for the moral and welfare of the crew. The Internet had finally hit GARY.

August 19 was the big day. Family and friends gathered on the pier in the early morning to see their Sailor safely off on deployment. Underway as scheduled, GARY headed east towards Pearl Harbor. The transit to Pearl Harbor saw the commencement of MEFEX Phase III. This would be the last training evolution the MEF SAG would see. From Pearl Harbor on out it was all 100% actual operations. Pearl Harbor was the first stop on GARY's transit to the Arabian Gulf. Pearl Harbor was a refueling stop and the last chance to finalize all deployment preparations. Within twenty-four hours, GARY was underway and headed east. Our east bound passage took us safely across the Pacific ocean and the memories of home port San Diego grew dimmer and more distant with each passing mile. The first land sighted since Pearl Harbor was the Marianas island chain two weeks out of Pearl Harbor. The transit continued right on schedule when the three ship MEF SAG entered the San Bernadino Straits of the Philippines. With a safe day long voyage through the first of three straits, GARY entered the South China Sea. The first visual sight was of a calm blue Sea which turned to thick haze filled sky the next day. Four days out of Singapore the entire South China Sea transit was ominous under a pale orange sun hidden by the smoke of Indonesian forest fires. In this way it was easy to understand the extensiveness of the fires a thousand miles away. The transit through the South China Sea also brought an unexpected rare opportunity to operate with the German Navy. With the GARY MEF SAG headed east and the German Task Group in transit to Shanghai China, each navy took time to conduct underway replenishment, publication exercises and maneuvering exercises with each other before heading off to their next port. Several GARY Sailors, including the XO, got an opportunity to spend a few hours on a German Ship and enjoy their hospitality.

In transit, August turned to September and the first stop since leaving the states was nearing. Under the canopy of thick smokey haze, GARY entered Singapore. This was the first time in a foreign country for much of the crew. Singapore had a host of sights, both shopping and cultural to experience. The GARY crew was perfectly behaved during this port visit and the chance to see another society with a high level of development and structure was an invaluable learning experience

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for many young Sailors. Everyone had a new found appreciation for the what it means to be an American. With the sights of Singapore fading in the wake, GARY's next passage was through the worlds busiest straits, the Straits of Malacca. Just a day out of Singapore, GARY headed up to Phuket, Thailand. Anchoring off the coast of Phuket, Thailand, the GARY crew was in for a very vibrant port visit. Thailand, *The Land of Smiles*, proved to be thoroughly enjoyable! Several Sailors also found the time to participate in the Navy Project Handclasp and extending the good will of the U.S. Navy to the Thai people. Five days in Thailand and the crew was refreshed and ready for the next phase of deployment, the Arabian Gulf. The month of September ended with GARY's inchoption to Fifth Fleet and the Arabian Gulf theater of operations.

October was highlighted with GARY assuming the duties from RENTZ in a quick and thorough turnover in port Muscat, Oman. The GARY crew fully realized all the training and preparations from the past year and a half had culminated towards this moment. After receiving all the vital paperwork and turnover items for Arabian Gulf operations, GARY was underway for her next most famous straits transit, the Strait of Hormuz. Now in Condition Three watch stations GARY was doing what she was built and trained to do. The straits transit went quietly and smoothly with all queries from Omani and Iranians conducted as expected. Once in the gulf, GARY headed towards Bahrain to do a face to face introduction to her new operational chain of command, Fifth Fleet and DESRON 50. After briefs and instructions on operational policies in the Arabian Gulf, GARY assumed her duty station in the North Arabian Gulf intercepting cargo vessels in and out of Iraqi ports in support of United Nations Sanctions on Iraq. By day GARY was doing boarding inspections of merchant vessels headed in or out of Iraqi ports. By night GARY was 12 miles off the coast of Iraq monitoring shipping traffic entering or leaving Iraqi ports watching for smugglers. If a merchant vessel proceeded into port or left port it was queried by GARY or her Helicopters Battlecats 21 or 26. Most merchant vessels abided by the United Nations Sanction policies and were cooperative in our queries. Once queried they were directed to anchorage for boarding and inspection the next morning before being cleared to their next port of destination. The Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) team worked many long hours ensuring U.N. Sanctions were being complied with. The VBSS team had one unfortunate incident when a member of the boarding team fell off a pilots ladder approx 25ft into the RHIB, suffering a broken leg. One event which would be an issue for GARY's entire three months in the gulf was the holding of three refugees from the merchant vessel Steve II. Steve II was being boarded by the USS PORT ROYAL when three crew members asked the American Sailors for asylum. After expressing fears for their life if they continue with their ship into Iraqi ports, the U.S. agreed to take them on board. The refugees were shuttled from ship to ship, remaining at sea and spending most of the next three months on GARY while diplomatic negotiations were being conducted to find a gulf nation to accept the three refugees. After three weeks of patrols in the North Arabian Gulf, GARY headed to Port Jabel Ali for some crew R&R over the Halloween weekend. Early the next month GARY was back up to the North Arabian Gulf for more Maritime Interdiction Operations.

November was an exciting month for GARY. The beginning of November marked the increase in tensions in the gulf when Iraq president Saddam Hussein refused to let American U.N. weapons inspectors continue their search for weapons of mass destruction. GARY happened to be

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the forward most ship on the front lines with here position 12 miles off the coast of Iraq when this crisis arose. This United Nations Security Council crisis saw the immediate buildup of American Naval Ships in the Gulf. GEORGE WASHINGTON and the NIMITZ were full steam ahead in their effort to reach the gulf to show their mighty presence in the region and deflate the issue. Until they arrived it was GARY at the forward most post keeping the peace in the North Arabian Gulf. GEORGE WASHINGTON joined forces from the Mediterranean Sea via the Red Sea followed by NIMITZ when she steamed right past her intended port visit Singapore to make straight for the gulf. After a tense week up in the North Arabian Gulf, GARY headed to Bahrain to participate in a multi navy exercise called Neon Falcon. After a brief planning and introduction phase inport, GARY and participating surface units, four Royal Bahrain Naval vessels, one British frigate HMS COVENTRY and HARRY W HILL headed out to sea for intensive scenario driven exercises. The exercises were designed to flex the capabilities and operational readiness of each unit participating. This was a chance for GARY to employ the ship's sensors and equipment in the capacity they were designed, instead of just monitoring the tactical picture in alert readiness for situations that may arise while operating in the gulf. During an Air Defense Exercise, GARY received exceptional support from the Bahrain Amiri Air Force. At the conclusion of Neon Falcon, GARY headed to Dubai, United Arab Emirates for R&R over the Thanksgiving Weekend.

December marked not only the end of the year, but GARY's final month in the Arabian Gulf. The first two weeks were underway back up in the North Arabian Gulf followed by a brief port stop in Bahrain. Underway again up in the North Arabian Gulf through the Christmas Holidays, the GARY crew tried hard to get in the holiday spirit, but being one of three ships underway for Christmas, it was difficult for all. Thoughts of family and loved ones back home weighed heavily on everyone's minds, but they were glad to be doing their part for their country. Underway through the Holiday season had a happy ending. On the 30 December, Gary pulled into Bahrain for the last time in preparation for her turn over with the REUBEN JAMES. The end was in sight and most important of all GARY had finished an arduous three months duty in the Arabian Gulf receiving a Well Done from Fifth Fleet for our excellent work on the *Tip of the Spear*. It had been a busy year from basic level training to the successful completion of Arabian Gulf duty. We were ready and anxious to turnover and begin the transit home.