



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN (CG 57)  
FPO AP 96671-1177

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From: Commanding Officer, USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN (CG 57)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, D.C.

Subj: USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN ANNUAL COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1997

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Command Chronology  
(3) Command Narrative  
(4) Supporting Documentation

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

*F. J. Dobrydney*  
F. J. DOBRYDNEY

Copy to:  
COMCARGRU SEVEN

## COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

### HOMEPORT:

Naval Station, San Diego, CA

### MISSION:

LAKE CHAMPLAIN operates offensively in a high-density, multi-threat environment as an integral part of a Carrier Battle Group or Surface Action Group (SAG) to include striking targets along hostile shorelines and well inland.

### COMMANDING OFFICER:

Captain Frank J. Dobrydney, USN

### ISIC:

#### OPERATIONAL:

01 JAN - 07 FEB	CTG 15.2	COMCARGRU SEVEN
08 FEB - 13 FEB	CTG 35.8	COMCARGRU SEVEN
14 FEB - 28 FEB	CTG 15.2	COMCARGRU SEVEN
01 MAR - 06 MAR	CTG 35.8	COMCARGRU SEVEN
07 MAR - 08 MAR	CTG 15.2	COMCARGRU SEVEN
09 MAR - 10 MAY	CTG 30.2	COMCARGRU SEVEN
11 MAY - 18 SEP	CTG 32.1	COMCARGRU SEVEN
19 SEP - 09 OCT	CTG 70.2	COMCARGRU SEVEN
10 OCT - 12 OCT	CTF 58	COMCARGRU SEVEN
13 OCT - 31 DEC	CTF 50	COMCARGRU SEVEN

#### ADMINISTRATIVE:

01 JAN - 31 DEC COMCARGRU SEVEN

### UNITS UNDER OPERATIONAL CONTROL:

NONE

### AIRCRAFT EMBARKED:

27 FEB - 06 MAR	HSL 37	EASYRIDER 64
21 APR - 25 APR	HSL 49	RED STINGER 106/108
13 MAY - 18 MAY	HSL 49	RED STINGER 101/106
24 JUN - 03 JUL	HSL 49	RED STINGER 100/109
14 JUL - 25 JUL	HSL 49	RED STINGER 100/109
05 SEP - 31 DEC	HSL 49	RED STINGER 108/109

## COMMAND CHRONOLOGY FOR 1997

28 Dec - 03 Jan - Holiday Leave Period

06 - 10 Jan - Logistics/Administration Training Review

13 - 15 Jan - Regional Support Organization (RSO) PQS Assist Visit

13 Jan - 13 Feb - Total Ship's Training Availability Phase I (TSTA I)

14 Jan - Fleet Technical Support Center, Pacific (FTSCPAC) Post Ballast Shaft Alignment

15 Jan - Post Repair Test & Trials (PRT&T) Missile Exercise (MISSILEX) Meeting with USS MILIUS

16 Jan - E-7 Advancement Examination

17 Jan - Fast Cruise

21 Jan - Underway (1454) for TSTA I/Leaders to Sea

22 Jan - Leaders to Sea  
- Detect to Engage Exercise  
- 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire  
- Long Range Fast Target/High Speed Surface Contact Quick Fire Exercise

23 Jan - Sea and Anchor Detail/Small Boat Passenger Transfer  
- Leaders to Sea  
- Full Power Demonstration  
- AAW Gunnery/CIWS Live Fire Exercise

24 Jan - Leaders to Sea  
- Anchor at FTG Anchorage 171  
- Underway Replenishment (UNREP) with USNS WALTER S. DIEHL  
- Moor (1536) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8

27 Jan	- Underway (0654) Enroute Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach - Moor (1356) Naval Weapon Station, Seal Beach
28 - 29 Jan	- Ammunition Onload
29 Jan	- Underway (1400) Enroute Naval Station, San Diego - Range Electronic Warfare Simulator (REWS) Range
30 Jan	- UNREP with USNS WALTER S. DIEHL - Flight Quarters/Deck Landing Qualifications (DLQs) with Red Stinger 106
31 Jan	- Moor (1129) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8
03 - 05 Feb	- Command Physical Readiness Test (PRT)
04 Feb	- Composite Training Underway Exercise (COMPTUEX) 97-2B Planning Conference - Load PRT&T Telemetry Gear
06 Feb	- RSO Retention Team Assist Visit
07 Feb	- Underway (0853) Enroute Naval Station, Pearl Harbor
08 - 10 Feb	- Small Arms Qualifications - General Quarters Drill
11 Feb	- MISSILEX Rehearsal
13 Feb	- Moor (0845) Naval Station, Pearl Harbor, Berth 18 - Captain Dobrydney calls on ADM A. R. Clemens, CINCPACFLT
14 Feb	- Inport Refuel - Missile Test Range Briefs
15 Feb	- Re-enlistment Ceremony at the USS ARIZONA Memorial

18 Feb	- Underway (1426) Enroute Barking Sands Missile Test Range - DLQs with civilian helicopter (Bell 206)
19 Feb	- Flight Quarters - Synthetic Arabian Gulf Strike Scenario
20 Feb	- 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire - MISSILEX Rehearsal
21 Feb	- 5"/54 Cal PAC Fire - 5"/54 Cal Live Gunnery Exercise versus "ROBOSKI" - BQM-34 (Drone) Tracking Exercise
22 Feb	- Moor (0825) Naval Station, Pearl Harbor, Berth 22 - Inport Refuel
24 Feb	- Underway (1350) Enroute Barking Sands Missile Test Range - Burial at Sea for LCDR (Ret) Kenneth M. Ross JR. and Yvonne V. Ross
25 Feb	- 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire - PRT&T MISSILEX with USS MILIUS and USS JOHN S. MCCAIN
26 Feb	- PRT&T Vandal Exercise (VANDALEX)
27 Feb	- Flight Quarters/Fly-on Easyrider 64 for lift of opportunity to San Diego - Depart Barking Sands Missile Test Range Enroute Naval Station, San Diego
28 Feb - 06 Mar	- Combat Systems Operational Sequencing System (CSOSS) Phase II
04 Mar	- E-4 Advancement Examination
05 Mar	- E-5 Advancement Examination
06 Mar	- UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK - Flight Quarters/Fly-off Easyrider 64 - Moor (1226) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8

10 - 21 Mar	- Heat Stress/Ventilation Survey
10 - 14 Mar	- Supply/SNAP II Limited Team Training (LTT) - Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection (SESI)
11 Mar	- E-6 Advancement Examination - Office of the Secretary of Defense Ship Visit - Commissioning Ceremony for ENS [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
12 Mar	- Breakfast/Capabilities Brief for RADM J. B. Nathman, COMCARGRU SEVEN
13 Mar	- TSTA II ISIC Conference
14 Mar	- Safety Center Survey
17 Mar - 18 Apr	- TSTA II
22 Mar	- USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN Easter Egg Hunt (Admiral Baker Recreation Center)
25 Mar	- Underway (0750) for TSTA II
26 Mar	- CIWS PAC Fire
27 Mar	- Full Power Demonstration - Connected Replenishment (CONREP) with USNS FLINT
28 Mar	- Visit, Boarding, Search and Seizure (VBSS) Boarding of Suspect Tug - Rig to Tow Suspect Tug - Moor to a Buoy TG-1 - Moor (1638) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 2
31 Mar	- Underway (1300) for TSTA II - MISSILEX Rehearsal - 5"/54 Cal PAC Fire
01 Apr	- TSTA II MISSILEX with USS WADSWORTH, USS MCCLUSKY, USS RENTZ, USS JOHN S. MCCAIN and USS PELELIU

02 Apr	- Flight Quarters - Torpedo Firing Exercise (TORPEX)
03 Apr	- UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK - General Quarters Drill - Moor (1609) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8
07 - 11 Apr	- Naval Surface Fire Support Team Training
07 Apr	- Engineering Certification (ECERT) Rehearsal - COMPTUEX 97-2B Final Planning Conference - MISSILEX 97-2 Main Planning Conference
08 Apr	- ECERT Rehearsal
11 Apr	- USS ANTIETAM Homecoming hosted by LAKE CHAMPLAIN
14 Apr	- Underway (1130) for ECERT
15 Apr	- Full Power Demonstration - General Quarters/Main Space Fire Drill - Engineering Casualty Control (ECC) Drills/ Engineering Evolutions - Moor (1750) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8
21 - 25 Apr	- TSTA III
21 Apr	- Underway (0858) for TSTA III - Flight Quarters/Fly-on Red Stinger 106/108 - Rendezvous/Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ
22 - 23 Apr	- Naval Surface Fire Support Exercise (FIREX I)
23 Apr	- Mass Casualty Drill - Flight Quarters - UNREP with USNS WALTER S. DIEHL
24 Apr	- General Quarters/Integrated Training Team (ITT) Scenario - Flight Quarters/DLQs with Red Stinger 108

25 Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General Quarters/ITT Scenario</li> <li>- Flight Quarters/Red Stinger 106/108 Fly-off</li> <li>- Moor (1600) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8</li> </ul>
26 Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International Surface Warfare Officer Ship Visit/Tour</li> </ul>
30 Apr - 02 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fast Cruise</li> <li>- General Quarters/ITT Scenarios</li> </ul>
06 - 08 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Final Evaluation Problem (FEP)</li> <li>- Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification (CMTQ)</li> <li>- Medical/Dental Readiness Evaluation</li> </ul>
06 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Underway (0759) for FEP/CMTQ</li> <li>- 50 Cal Gunnery Exercise</li> <li>- General Quarters</li> </ul>
08 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ship Visit by VADM A. J. Krekich, COMNAVSURFPAC</li> <li>- Total Ship's Survivability Exercise (TSSE)</li> <li>- Moor (1452) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8</li> </ul>
12 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- COMPTUEX 97-2B Pre-Sail Conference onboard USS NIMITZ</li> </ul>
13 - 19 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- COMPTUEX 97-2B</li> </ul>
13 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Underway (0726) for COMPTUEX 97-2B</li> <li>- Flight Quarters/Red Stinger 101/106 Fly-on</li> </ul>
13 - 14 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- USW Exercise</li> </ul>
14 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ</li> <li>- Air Defense Exercise</li> </ul>
15 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VBSS Boarding of USS KINKAID</li> </ul>
16 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flight Quarters</li> <li>- Submarine Familiarization with USS SALT LAKE CITY</li> <li>- USW Exercise</li> <li>- Battle Group UNREP Protection Exercise</li> <li>- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO</li> <li>- Air Defense Exercise</li> </ul>



17 May	- Flight Quarters/VERTREP/DLQs with Red Stinger 101/106 - USW Exercise
18 May	- Flight Quarters/Red Stinger 101/106 Fly-off - Battle Group UNREP Protection Exercise - UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
19 May	- Moor (0857) Bravo Pier - Ammunition Onload - Underway (1312) Enroute Naval Station, San Diego - Moor (1426) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8
22 May	- Underway (1017) for ECERT - ECC Drills - Moor (2040) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8
27 - 29 May	- Industrial Hygiene Survey
27 May - 06 Jun	- Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR)
27 May - 19 Jun	- PACTRAMID I
03 Jun	- Retirement ceremony for ETCS(SW) [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
04 Jun	- Underway (0721) for CSRR - Shipboard Electronic System Evaluation Facility (SESEF/ULM-4) Range - Full Power Demonstration/Full Power Steering Checks - Anchor Drop Test - Moor (1658) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8
06 Jun	- NIMITZ Battle Group Commander's Conference - MISSILEX 97-2 Final Planning Conference - FLEETEX 97-2 Final Planning Conference
09 - 13 Jun	- Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV)

27 Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Air Defense Exercise</li> <li>- Texas Thunder TLAM Exercise (TLAMEX)</li> <li>- Jammed Gun/USS SACRAMENTO EOD Fly-away Drill</li> <li>- USW Exercise</li> </ul>
28 Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VBSS Boarding of USS COMSTOCK</li> <li>- Unexploded Ordnance/USS SACRAMENTO EOD Fly-away Drill</li> </ul>
29 Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mini Air Defense Exercise</li> <li>- 5"/54 Cal/CIWS Gunnery Exercise</li> <li>- War-At-Sea Exercise (WASEX)</li> </ul>
30 Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MISSILEX Rehearsal</li> <li>- USW Exercise</li> <li>- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO</li> </ul>
01 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FLEETEX MISSILEX with USS PORT ROYAL, USS GARY, USS FORD and USS KINKAID</li> <li>- USW Exercise</li> </ul>
02 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FLEETEX VANDALEX</li> <li>- Flight Quarters/Red Stinger 109 Fly-off</li> </ul>
03 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flight Quarters/Red Stinger 100 Fly-off</li> <li>- Moor (0901) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 7</li> </ul>
04 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fourth of July Bell Ringing Ceremony</li> </ul>
07 - 11 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Force Protection Exercise</li> </ul>
07 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fleet Week Parade of Ships Coordination Meeting</li> </ul>
11 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JTFEX 97-2 Pre-Sail Conference</li> </ul>
13 Jul - 06 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PACTRAMID III</li> </ul>
14 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Underway (0814) for JTFEX 97-2</li> <li>- Harpoon Exercise (HARPOONEX) Rehearsal</li> <li>- Flight Quarters/Crossdeck with JMSDF Helicopter (SHGOJ)/Fly-on Red Stinger 100/109</li> </ul>
15 - 22 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flight Quarters</li> </ul>

15 Jul	- JTFEX HARPOONEX
16 Jul	- Ship Visit by VADM H. A. Browne, COMTHIRDFLT - Simulated Strait of Catalina Transit - Deployed RHIB to provide Rescue and Assistance to distressed Sailing Vessel WHISTLING RIGGING reported to be taking on water
22 Jul	- UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK
24 Jul	- NSFS for PELELIU ARG Amphibious Landing - Flight Quarters/Red Stinger 109 Fly-off
25 Jul	- Flight Quarters/Red Stinger 100 Fly-off - Parade of Ships/19 Gun Salute to the Honorable William J. Cassidy, Assistant Secretary of the Navy - Moor (1454) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 7
28 Jul	- Underway (0730) Enroute Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach for Ammunition Onload - Moor (1257) Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach
29 - 30 Jul	- Deployment Ammunition Onload - Command Physical Readiness Test (PRT)
30 Jul	- Underway (1304) Enroute Naval Station, San Diego
31 Jul	- UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK - Navigation Checkride - Moor (1354) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 7 - 7DO Availability Arrival Conference
01 Aug	- Underway (0821) for Family Cruise - Full Power Demonstration - 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire - Moor (1438) Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8
02 - 29 Aug	- Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) Period
05 - 06 Aug	- CORTRAMID West Tours

06 - 07 Aug	- NIMITZ Battle Group Pre-Deployment Briefs
14 Aug	- SRA 98 Planning Meeting
15 Aug	- PNC (SW) [REDACTED] Retirement Ceremony
20 Aug	- SRA 98 Core Work Definition Conference
22 Aug	- Breast Out for Port Propeller Replacement
26 - 29 Aug	- Divers/Port Propeller Replacement/Hull Painting
28 Aug	- Environmental Health Survey
03 Sep	- Fast Cruise
04 Sep	- E-4 Advancement Examination
05 Sep	- Underway (0950) for WESTPAC '97-'98 - Flight Quarters/Red Stinger 108/109 Fly-on - PCMS Testing (SESEF Range)
06 - 20 Sep	- Flight Quarters
06 Sep	- Rendezvous/Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ
08 Sep	- DIVTACS with NIMITZ Battle Group - Small Arms Qualifications
09 Sep	- E-5 Advancement Examination
10 - 11 Sep	- Texas Thunder TLAMEX
10 - 13 Sep	- USW Exercise 97-2
10 Sep	- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO - Small Arms Qualifications
11 Sep	- E-6 Advancement Examination
12 Sep	- Lunch/Awards Ceremony with RADM J. B. Nathman, COMCARGRU SEVEN

14 Sep	- Cross International Dateline/Advance Clocks 24 Hours (15 September Lost) - UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
16 Sep	- WASEX versus USS CONSTELLATION Battle Group
17 Sep	- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
18 Sep	- VERTREP with USNS SAN JOSE - Chop to Seventh Fleet - USW Exercise
19 Sep	- Battle Group Commander's Conference onboard USS NIMITZ - DIVTACS with NIMITZ Battle Group
21 Sep	- Moor (0926) Naval Station, Yokosuka, Japan, Pier 9
23 - 24 Sep	- FORTRESS RAPTOR TLAMEX
23 - 27 Sep	- Flight Quarters
23 Sep	- Underway (0811) Enroute Hong Kong - UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO - WASEX
24 - 25 Sep	- Exercise VALIANT BLITZ
24 Sep	- UNREP (DDFAS) with USS NIMITZ
25 Sep	- Battle Group Photo Exercise with USS INDEPENDENCE Battle Group
26 Sep	- UNREP (Light Line Transfer) with USS KINKAID
27 Sep	- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
28 Sep	- Moor (0720) to Buoy A-49, Hong Kong
02 Oct	- Underway (0923) Enroute Arabian Gulf
03 - 11 Oct	- Flight Quarters

03 Oct	- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO - 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire
04 Oct	- 5"/54 Cal PAC Fire
05 Oct	- Strait of Malacca Transit
06 Oct	- VERTREP with USNS YUKON
07 Oct	- Battle Group Commander's Conference onboard USS NIMITZ - 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire - Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ
08 Oct	- 50 Cal Machine-gun Familiarization Fire
09 Oct	- AAW Detect-to-Engage Exercise - UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO - Chop to Fifth Fleet
11 - 12 Oct	- Strait of Hormuz Transit
12 Oct	- Anchor (1256) at Bahrain Bell
13 Oct	- Fifth Fleet Inchop Briefs onboard USS NIMITZ
14 Oct	- Underway (0435) from anchorage - UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
15 Oct - 01 Nov	- Flight Quarters
15 Oct	- Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ
18 Oct	- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
19 Oct	- Strait of Hormuz Transit - Rendezvous with USS PELELIU ARG
20 Oct	- Transit Strait of Hormuz (ARG Escort)
21 Oct	- Rendezvous with USS NIMITZ
22 Oct	- VERTREP with USNS SIRIUS - Small Arms Qualifications

25 Oct	- UNREP with USNS TIPPECANOE
27 Oct	- Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ
31 Oct	- DIVTACS with NIMITZ Battle Group
01 Nov	- UNREP with USNS TIPPECANOE
03 Nov	- Moor (1043) Port Rashid, Dubai, UAE, Berth 28
07 Nov	- Breakfast for CO/XO of HMS NOTTINGHAM
08 Nov	- Underway (0848) Enroute Northern Arabian Gulf - 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire
09 - 23 Nov	- Flight Quarters
13 Nov	- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
14 Nov	- Embark British Media Team - 50 Cal/25mm Machine-gun Familiarization Fire
17 Nov	- Battle Group Commander's Conference onboard USS NIMITZ - UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
19 Nov	- 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire
20 Nov	- VERTREP with USNS SPICA
23 Nov	- Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ
24 Nov	- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
25 Nov - 02 Dec	- Flight Quarters
26 Nov	- 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire
28 Nov	- General Quarters Drill
29 Nov	- Ship Visit by the Honorable Dr. John Hamre, Deputy Secretary of Defense and VADM T. B. Fargo, COMFIFTHFLT

30 Nov	- UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO - Night DLQs with Desert Duck 740
01 Dec	- Plane Guard with USS GEORGE WASHINGTON
03 Dec	- Moor (0859) Port Rashid, Dubai, UAE, Berth 28
04 Dec	- Commander, United Kingdom Task Group Calls on VADM T. B. Fargo, COMFIFTHFLT Hosted by LAKE CHAMPLAIN - LAKE CHAMPLAIN Half-way Party at International Seafarer's (Seaman's) Center, Dubai, UAE
08 - 11 Dec	- Flight Quarters
08 Dec	- Underway (0900) Enroute Northern Arabian Gulf - 5"/54 Cal PAC FIRE - UNREP with USS SEATTLE
10 Dec	- USS NIMITZ Battle Group PHOTOEX
12 - 23 Dec	- Flight Quarters
12 Dec	- Plane Guard with USS GEORGE WASHINGTON
13 Dec	- UNREP (DDFAS) with USS NIMITZ
14 Dec	- UNREP/CONREP with USS SACRAMENTO - VERTREP with USNS SPICA
15 Dec	- VBSS Boarding of M/V BISMIHITA' LA
16 Dec	- VBSS Boarding of M/V STEVE II
17 Dec	- 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC FIRE - VBSS Boarding of M/V IBN YOUNUS
19 Dec	- Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ
20 Dec	- UNREP/VERTREP with USS SEATTLE - Air Defense Conference onboard USS NIMITZ
22 Dec	- Plane Guard with USS NIMITZ



24 Dec	- Moor (1041) Jebal Ali, UAE, Berth 60 - Ship Visit by ADM J. L. Johnson, CNO; VADM T. B. Fargo, COMFIFTHFLT and the U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates
25 Dec	- Catholic Mass (Fifth Fleet Chaplain)
29 - 31 Dec	- Flight Quarters
29 Dec	- Underway (0900) Enroute Northern Arabian Gulf - 5"/54 Cal/CIWS PAC Fire - VERTREP with USNS SPICA - UNREP WITH USNS TIPPECANOE
30 - 31 Dec	- Plane Guard with USS GEORGE WASHINGTON

## **COMMAND NARRATIVE FOR 1997**

The new year began with LAKE CHAMPLAIN moored at Naval Station, San Diego, Pier 8 under the command of Captain Frank J. Dobrydney. Following the completion of the regular overhaul and a successful three day sea trials, the ship has been inport since November 20, 1996. In early December, 1996, the ship conducted the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) Phase II. Following the successful completion of CART II, the crew stood down for the holidays until January 3. On the ship, meanwhile, work began on the last major job remaining from the regular overhaul, the installation of approximately 110 long tons of lead ballast in the ship's shaft alley.

In early January, the crew returned from the short holiday standdown to begin in earnest the task of preparing for the upcoming Western Pacific deployment. Even as shipfitters from National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO) were completing the ballast installation, the crew was busy with the first round of inspections and assist visits which included the Logistics/Administrative Training Review (LATR) and the RSO PQS assessment in preparation for beginning the Total Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) I on January 13.

As part of TSTA I, the first underway training period was scheduled from January 21 through 24. By that time, as the ship had not gone to sea in over two months, the crew held a fast cruise on January 17 to validate the watchbill and to re-familiarize watchstanders with their watch positions.

Intended as one of the training periods for TSTA I, this underway period also had the secondary purpose of supporting COMNAVSURFPAC's Leaders to Sea Program, whereby leaders from the local community were given the opportunity to see the Surface Navy at work. Helicopter flights were scheduled each day of the underway period to bring a different group of leaders to the ship. While onboard, these leaders had the opportunity to tour the ship and talk to the crew as well as to observe some of the TSTA I training events including several 5"/54 caliber gun, Close-In-Weapons System (CIWS) and 50 caliber machine-gun firing exercises; a full power demonstration; an anchoring exercise and an underway replenishment (UNREP) with USNS WALTER S. DIEHL.

On January 22 and 24, the helicopter flights went as scheduled; however, on January 23, inclement weather prevented the helicopter from flying. As a result, LAKE CHAMPLAIN was required to set sea detail and proceed into San Diego Harbor where she picked up the leaders from a tug in the vicinity of Broadway Pier before heading back to the SOCAL Opareas for the day's events. Fortunately, by that afternoon, weather had cleared sufficiently to allow the helicopter to pick up the

leaders from the ship without having to proceed into San Diego Harbor a second time. On January 24, at the end of the four day underway, LAKE CHAMPLAIN proceeded back to the Naval Station, San Diego where she moored late in the afternoon at Pier 8.

The following week, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway early in the morning on January 27 enroute to Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach where, over the course of the next two days, she completed her post-overhaul ammunition onload. After the completion of the extensive onload, the ship got underway to conduct some electronic testing at the Range Electronic Warfare Simulator (REWS) range before proceeding to the SOCAL Opareas for two days of additional training. During the time that the ship spent in the SOCAL Opareas, the crew conducted Deck Landing Qualifications (DLQs) with Red Stinger 106 and another UNREP with USNS WALTER S. DIEHL. Finally, on January 31, the ship set sea detail to return to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored later that morning at Pier 8.

The month of February and the first week of March were dedicated by the Post Repair Test and Trials (PRT&T) Missile Exercise (MISSILEX). Shortly after returning from the Seal Beach onload, technicians arrived to install missile telemetry gear while the crew worked to onload the necessary supplies for the long transit to Naval Station, Pearl Harbor to participate in the PRT&T MISSILEX along with USS MILIUS and USS JOHN S. MCCAIN. Once the preparations were completed, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway on February 7 for the transit to Pearl Harbor. A relatively uneventful transit, the ship used the time to conduct general quarters drills, MISSILEX rehearsals and several days of small arms qualifications from the flight deck. At the end of six days, the ship arrived at Naval Station, Pearl Harbor where she moored on February 13 at Berth 18.

Once inport, Captain Dobrydney made a call on ADM A. J. Clemens, CINCPACFLT while the ship prepared for the upcoming PRT&T MISSILEX. In addition to completing an inport refueling and unloading some additional supplies, key MISSILEX personnel attended range briefs given by technicians from Barking Sands Missile Test Range and flight deck personnel went to Hickam Air Force Base where they received training on the civilian Bell 206 Helicopter which would be utilized for transportation of range personnel during the MISSILEX.

After a brief port visit in Pearl Harbor, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway on February 18 enroute to Barking Sands Missile Test Range. Once on the range, the ship conducted some DLQs with the civilian Bell 206 helicopter, a MISSILEX dress rehearsal and a 5"/54 caliber gun and CIWS PAC fire. On the final day, the ship conducted a second 5"/54 caliber PAC fire; after which she

conducted a live firing exercise against "ROBOSKI," a remote control jet ski during which over 100 rounds of ammunition were expended. Later that afternoon, after conducting some tracking runs on a BQM-34 drone identical to the ones which would be used during the actual MISSILEX, the ship left the test range to return to Naval Station, Pearl Harbor where she moored the next morning at Berth 22.

Inport for just two days, the ship completed a second inport refueling in preparation for getting underway for the PRT&T MISSILEX. Shortly after securing from sea detail on February 24, the ship conducted a burial at sea for the cremains of LCDR (ret) Kenneth M. Ross Jr. and his wife Yvonne V. Ross while enroute to Barking Sands Missile Test Range to rendezvous with USS MILIUS and USS JOHN S. MCCAIN on February 25.

With the PRT&T MISSILEX completed, LAKE CHAMPLAIN prepared for the transit back to Naval Station San Diego. Setting flight quarters on the morning of February 27, she embarked Easyrider 64, a SH-60 helicopter, for a lift of opportunity before departing from Barking Sands Missile Test Range to begin the transit home which; as it turns out, was as uneventful as the voyage over. Upon arriving in the SOCAL Opareas at the end of the six day transit, LAKE CHAMPLAIN conducted an UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK and set flight quarters to fly-off Easyrider 64 before proceeding to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored at Pier 8 on the afternoon of March 6.

Following her return to San Diego, LAKE CHAMPLAIN completed a successful Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection (SESI) as well as a host of assorted assist visits and surveys. In the midst of all this, LAKE CHAMPLAIN also served as the host ship for a visit by guests from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, conducted a commissioning ceremony for YNC(SW) [REDACTED] and hosted a breakfast and capabilities brief for RADM J. B. Nathman, COMCARGRU SEVEN.

With the completion of the last assist visit on March 17, LAKE CHAMPLAIN began TSTA II. Designated as an intermediate training phase, the ship got underway for the first three day training period on March 25. During the first two days, the ship conducted several CIWS PAC fires, a full power demonstration and connected replenishment (CONREP) with USNS FLINT. On the final day, the Visit, Boarding, Search and Seizure (VBSS) team performed a practice boarding of a suspect tug which LAKE CHAMPLAIN would later rig to tow. Following the VBSS training, the ship practiced mooring to a buoy before setting sea detail to return to Naval Station, San Diego where she would moor on March 28 at Pier 2.

The next week, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway on March 31 enroute to the Pacific Missile Test Range at San Nicholas Island to participate on April 1 with USS WADSWORTH, USS MCCLUSKY, USS RENTZ, USS JOHN S. MCCAIN and USS PELILIU in the TSTA II MISSILEX. During the MISSILEX, although given only one drone presentation, LAKE CHAMPLAIN again scored an evaluated warhead kill. After the MISSILEX, the ship transited to the SHOBA Opareas at San Clemente Island where she conducted a torpedo firing exercise. Finally, on April 3, the ship conducted an UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK before returning to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored that afternoon at Pier 8.

The next two weeks were dedicated to the training of the navigation and gunnery teams for the Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) Certification and to preparing the Engineering Department for the upcoming Engineering Certification (ECERT). During the first week, instructors from the Afloat Training Group (ATG) came onboard to conduct NSFS lectures and drills for all gunnery and navigation personnel. At the same time, the engineers were busy repairing equipment, conducting drills and holding training for the Engineering Certification which was scheduled to begin the following week.

On April 14, inspectors from the Propulsion Examining Board (PEB) arrived to begin the Engineering Certification. Following an extensive series of equipment safety checks and space walkthroughs, LAKE CHAMPLAIN was cleared to get underway late that first morning. Once underway, the ship completed a full power demonstration and main space fire drill before commencing the first set of engineering evolutions and casualty control drills. The next day, the ECERT continued with additional sets of evolutions and casualty control drills. By the end of the second day, although the ship passed all other requirements, it was unable to demonstrate the necessary number of evolutions and casualty control drills. Consequently, although the ship had been scheduled to remain underway until April 17, the decision was made to return to Naval Station, San Diego where the ship moored late in the afternoon of April 15 at Pier 8.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway again on April 21 enroute to the SOCAL Opareas for TSTA III. The final dress rehearsal for the Final Evaluation Problem (FEP), the separate training teams used this underway to conduct integrated drills as an Integrated Training Team (ITT). Shortly after securing from sea detail, the ship set flight quarters to fly-on Red Stinger 106 and 108 before proceeding to rendezvous with USS NIMITZ to perform plane guard duties.

On April 22, LAKE CHAMPLAIN detached from the carrier to proceed to the Surface Fire Support Range at San Clemente Island

where, over the course of the next two days, she was scheduled to complete the NSFS Certification as part of Fire Exercise (FIREX) I. Although allowed two days to complete the exercise, LAKE CHAMPLAIN's gunnery team proved to be so proficient that by the end of the first day, they had shot well enough to complete the certification.

Using the found time on April 23, the ship conducted a mass casualty drill and some additional flight quarters with Red Stinger 106 and 108 before her scheduled UNREP in the afternoon with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK. During the last two days, the ITT ran a series of integrated drills similar to ones which would be run for the actual FEP. On April 25, the ship set flight quarters to fly-off Red Stinger 106 and 108. That afternoon, she set sea detail to return to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored at Pier 8.

Aside from hosting a visit by an international group of Surface Warfare Officers on April 26, the next week was dedicated to preparing for the upcoming FEP. Each day the ship conducted a fast cruise during which the ITT ran an integrated battle scenario. Finally on May 6, representatives from ATG arrived to begin the FEP. Getting underway early that morning, the ship completed a 50 caliber machine-gun live firing exercise against a "Killer Tomato" before beginning the integrated scenario. During the next two days, the scenario imposed various air and surface attacks, each one causing some additional casualty which the crew had to respond to. On May 8, the ship set flight quarters to receive VADM A. J. Krekich, COMNAVSURFPAC, who came aboard to observe the Total Ship's Survivability Exercise (TSSE) which was the final phase of the FEP. During the TSSE, the ITT imposed a final attack which left the ship on fire, with flooding; and without mobility or a hard kill weapons capability. To pass the exercise, the crew had to put out all fires and stop all flooding, as well as restore some mobility and a hard kill weapons capability within a specified time limit. Successfully accomplishing this, LAKE CHAMPLAIN passed the FEP. That afternoon, the ship re-set flight quarters to fly-off VADM Krekich before returning to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored at Pier 8.

With the completion of FEP, LAKE CHAMPLAIN moved into the second phase of the deployment workup cycle, the underway Battle Group exercises. A week after the FEP, the ship got underway on May 13 to participate in the Composite Underway Training Exercise (COMPTUEX) 97-2B. During this week-long exercise, LAKE CHAMPLAIN would operate with other ships of the NIMITZ Battle Group for the first time. Shortly after getting underway, the ship set flight quarters to fly-on Red Stinger 101 and 106 which would embark onboard for the duration of the exercise. Significant events of the COMPTUEX included several days of plane guard duties with USS NIMITZ, a VBSS boarding of USS KINKAID, an UNREP

with USS SCARAMENTO, a submarine familiarization with USS SALT LAKE CITY, several Air Defense Exercises (ADEX) and an extensive USW exercise.

On May 18, as LAKE CHAMPLAIN prepared to return to port, the ship conducted a second UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO and flight quarters to fly-off Red Stinger 101 and 106. The next morning, the ship set sea detail to proceed into San Diego Harbor where she first moored at Bravo Pier for a brief ammunition onload. Later that afternoon, after completing the onload, the ship got underway again to proceed to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored at Pier 8.

Two days later, inspectors from the PEB returned to re-evaluate the engineering evolutions and casualty control drills. After an abbreviated round of equipment safety checks, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway on the morning of May 22. After securing from sea detail, the ship immediately commenced the evaluation of the engineering evolutions and casualty control drills. Running late into the evening, the ship successfully completed the last drill and successfully completed the ECERT. Despite the hour, the decision was made to set sea detail and return to Naval Station, San Diego where the ship moored at Pier 8.

Following the successful completion of the ECERT, the focus of attention shifted to the upcoming inspection by the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) scheduled for the second week in June. In concert with INSURV, the Combat Systems Department also began the Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR). An extremely busy time on LAKE CHAMPLAIN, this period was also the time that the ship welcomed it's first group of Midshipmen of the summer. A relatively small group of six First Class Midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy, they arrived late in the evening on May 27 and would be on the ship through June 19.

On June 3, the ship took time out from the CSRR to bid farewell to ETCS(SW) [REDACTED] as he retired from the Navy after over twenty years of faithful and dedicated service. The following day, the ship got underway for a day of testing as part of the CSRR. During the underway, the ship conducted extensive testing at the Shipboard Electronic Systems Evaluation Facility (SESEF) Range before heading out to the SOCAL Opareas to conduct a full power demonstration and full power steering checks. At the conclusion of the day, the ship performed an anchor drop test and then returned to Naval Station, San Diego Port where she moored at Pier 8.

Scheduled to begin on June 9, several of the INSURV inspectors, principally the engineering and damage control inspectors, arrived the weekend before to conduct their pre-underway checks. Consequently, by early morning of the first day, LAKE CHAMPLAIN was cleared to get underway for the Underway Material Inspection (UMI). Because most of the inspectors for the UMI were the same ones who had witnessed the Combat Systems

checks for the CSRR underway day, many of those checks were validated. In addition to those tests, the ship also demonstrated the SQR-19 Towed Array Sonar and SQR-25 NIXIE, conducted a 5"/54 caliber and CIWS pacfire and tested the countermeasure washdown system. At the end of the UMI day, the ship returned to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored late in the evening at Pier 8.

After the UMI, the INSURV shifted to the open and inspect phase during which equipment which had been found out of specification during the UMI or other equipment which ship's force wanted to look at were taken apart to be examined. By the end of the fourth day the INSURV was essentially complete. On June 13, the board members returned to debrief the inspection which they cited as "one of, if not the best," they had ever conducted.

The week following the INSURV once again was packed with inspections as the ship successfully completed the Logistics Management Assessment (LMA), the Pay/Personnel/Administration Training (PPAT) Assessment and the Gas Turbine Readiness Review (G544). At the end of the week, after completing an inport refueling, the ship took a day off on June 19 to enjoy LAKE CHAMPLAIN day at a San Diego Padres baseball game.

On June 19, LAKE CHAMPLAIN bid farewell to her first group of midshipmen and welcomed her second group. Whereas the first group had been small and comprised of midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy, this second group was much larger, containing ten midshipmen from both the U.S. Naval Academy and various ROTC programs from across the country. Arriving extremely early on the morning of June 24, their arrival coincided with LAKE CHAMPLAIN's preparations to get underway for the Fleet Exercise (FLEETEX) 97-2.

The second of three exercises, the FLEETEX focused more on operating as a Battle Group than did the COMPTUEX. Shortly after getting underway on June 24, the ship set flight quarters to fly-on Red Stinger 100 and 109 before proceeding out to the SOCAL Oparea to rendezvous with the rest of the Battle Group. During this exercise, LAKE CHAMPLAIN would participate with the Battle Group in a 40 hour scenario simulating operations in a hostile environment and in conducting the TEXAS THUNDER TLAM Exercise (TLAMEX) before detaching to conduct operations with the USS PELILIU Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG). While with the ARG, the ship provided gunnery support during the Naval Surface Fire Supporting Arms Coordination Exercise (SACEX) as well as conducted VBSS take-down of USS COMSTOCK and two Explosive Ordnance Fly-way drills for the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) detachment on USS SACRAMENTO.

On June 29, LAKE CHAMPLAIN detached from the ARG to rendezvous with the Battle Group to participate in a 5"/54 caliber gun and CIWS gunnery exercise, a War-at-Sea Exercise



(WASEX) and a USW exercise. The next day, the ship conducted an UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO before proceeding with USS PORT ROYAL, USS FORD, USS KINKAID, and USS GARY to the Pacific Missile Test Range at San Nicholas Island for the FLEETEX MISSILEX.

Similar to the one conducted for the PRT&T, the FLEETEX MISSILEX was broken up into two days. On the first day, LAKE CHAMPLAIN, along with USS PORT ROYAL, faced one presentation of a supersonic, high-altitude AQM-37C drone. On the second day, along with USS PORT ROYAL and USS FORD, LAKE CHAMPLAIN faced a supersonic, maneuvering Vandal missile. After the successful completion of the MISSILEX, the ship set flight quarters to fly-off Red Stinger 109. The next day, she flew-off Red Stinger 100 before setting sea detail to return to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored early on the morning of July 3 at Pier 7.

The following week, LAKE CHAMPLAIN and the other ships in the Battle Group conducted a Force Protection exercise. While moored at various piers at Naval Station, San Diego, the Battle Group simulated being moored in a foreign port where they had to protect themselves from terrorist activity. As the week progressed, the "terrorist activity" increased until it became so bad that on July 14, all the ships were required to sortie. During this period, LAKE CHAMPLAIN bid farewell to her second group of Midshipmen and prepared to receive her third and final group. This final group, the largest of the summer, contained 13 Midshipmen also from the U.S. Naval Academy and various ROTC programs. Arriving on July 13, they came onboard just in time to get underway for the Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX) 97-2.

The sortie of ships which marked the end of the Force Protection exercise also marked the start of the JTFEX. Shortly after getting underway, the ship set flight quarters to conduct crossdeck training with the SHGOJ, a SH-60 helicopter from the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force; after which she flew-on Red Stinger 100 and 109. The JTFEX, unlike the COMPTUEX and FLEETEX, had no scheduled events with the exception of a Harpoon Firing Exercise (HARPOONEX) on July 15; otherwise, it was entirely scenario driven. For the HARPOONEX, LAKE CHAMPLAIN, along with a S-3B aircraft from USS NIMITZ simultaneously engaged a QST-35 Septar augmented with radar reflectors.

On July 16, the ship hosted a visit by VADM H. A. Browne, COMTHIRDFLT. Shortly after VADM Browne departed, the ship received a distress call from the sailing vessel WHISTLING RIGGING who reported that she was taking on water. Deploying the RHIB with a rescue and assistance team, LAKE CHAMPLAIN provided assistance until Coast Guard units from San Diego arrived on the scene.

Once the hostilities phase began, LAKE CHAMPLAIN conducted an UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK before detaching from the Battle Group to provide NSFS for the ARG as they conducted their amphibious demonstrations. The JTFEX concluded on July 24 with

an amphibious landing by the ARG with LAKE CHAMPLAIN providing gunnery support.

On the afternoon of July 24, the ship set flight quarters to fly-off Red Stinger 109. The next day, she flew -off Red Stinger 100 before proceeding to a staging area in preparation for the San Diego Fleet Week Parade of Ships. Leading the Parade of Ships into San Diego Harbor, LAKE CHAMPLAIN rendered a 19-gun salute with her 40mm saluting battery to the Honorable William J. Cassidy, Assistant Secretary of the Navy as the ship passed in review at Broadway Pier before proceeding to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored that afternoon at Pier 7.

The following week, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway on July 28 enroute to Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach to conduct her predeployment ammunition onload. Completing the short transit, the ship moored at Seal Beach early that same afternoon. After the completion of the two day onload, the ship got underway on the afternoon of July 30 to return to Naval Station, San Diego. Remaining in the SOCAL Oparea overnight, the ship conducted an UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK on the morning of July 31 before setting sea detail to proceed to Naval Station, San Diego. During the sea detail, the ship stopped in the vicinity of Broadway Pier to receive, by small boat, a representative from COMCARGRU SEVEN staff who came onboard to conduct the Navigation Checkride. Shortly thereafter, the ship moored at Pier 7.

The next morning, LAKE CHAMPLAIN embarked over 400 family and guest of crewmembers as the ship got underway for a brief family cruise. During the day, the guests had the opportunity to tour the ship as well as observe a full power demonstration, 5"/54 caliber gun and CIWS pacfire and a fly-by by Red Stinger 109. Later that afternoon, the ship returned to Naval Station, San Diego where she moored at Pier 7.

The underway for the family cruise marked the last time that LAKE CHAMPLAIN would get underway before her Western Pacific/Arabian Gulf deployment. On August 2, the ship began the Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) period which lasted until August 29. With the exception of a few events, and almost half the crew on leave, the month of August was an uneventful period. On August 5 and 6, the ship served as the host platform for the CORTRAMID (West) midshipmen tours where approximately 30 Third Class midshipmen from various ROTC programs came aboard for a ship tour as part of their Surface Navy week. At the same time, LAKE CHAMPLAIN bid farewell to her final group of assigned midshipmen for the summer. On August 15, the ship took time out to conduct a retirement ceremony for PNC(SW) [REDACTED] as he retired after twenty years of faithful and devoted service. Finally, on August 26, the ship breasted out onto camel fenders to facilitate the replacement of the port propeller blade and for some underwater hull painting.

The Western Pacific deployment began on September 5 with LAKE CHAMPLAIN getting underway in the morning. Shortly after securing from sea detail, the ship set flight quarters to fly-on Red Stinger 108 and 109 from HSL 49, Detachment 3, which would be the helicopters embarked for the duration of the deployment. Afterwards, the ship proceeded to the SESEF Range to conduct some Passive Counter-Measure System (PCMS) testing before heading to the SOCAL Opareas to rendezvous with the rest of the Battle Group on the morning of September 6.

After rendezvousing with USS NIMITZ, the Battle Group remained in the SOCAL Opareas for most of the next two days as they waited for the airwing to complete their carrier qualifications. On the morning of September 7, USS FORD, USS KINKAID and USS SACRAMENTO departed the SOCAL Opareas to begin the westbound transit while LAKE CHAMPLAIN remained with the carrier. By early afternoon, LAKE CHAMPLAIN also departed the SOCAL Opareas; and, later that evening, with her carrier qualifications finally complete, USS NIMITZ began the westbound transit at best speed to catch up to the rest of the Battle Group.

The transit to the first port visit in Yokosuka, Japan was a very eventful one. In addition to the daily flight quarters and regular UNREPS with USS SACRAMENTO, the ship played a significant role in the TEXAS THUNDER TLAMEX on September 10 and 11 and in the USW Exercise 97-2 from September 10 through 13. On September 12, the ship hosted a visit and lunch by RADM J. B. Nathman, COMCARGRU SEVEN, who came aboard to present some awards to several LAKE CHAMPLAIN Sailors. On September 16, the Battle Group conducted a War-at-Sea Exercise (WASEX) against the returning USS CONSTELLATION Battle Group. On September 18, shortly after chopping to Seventh Fleet, the ship conducted a vertical replenishment (VERTREP) with USNS SAN JOSE followed the next day by DIVTACS with the other ships of the Battle Group. Finally, on September 21, after an almost two week transit, the ship proceeded into Naval Station, Yokosuka, Japan where she moored at Pier 9.

After a short port visit in Yokosuka, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway on the morning of September 23 enroute to a second port visit of Hong Kong. During the five day transit to Hong Kong, in addition to flight quarters and several UNREPs with USS SACRAMENTO, USS KINKAID and USS NIMITZ; the ship also participated in a WASEX and Exercise VALIANT BLITZ with the PELELIU ARG and the ships of the USS INDEPENDENCE Battle Group on September 25. At the end of the five day transit, the ship set sea detail to proceed into Hong Kong Harbor where she moored to Buoy A-49 in the outer harbor on September 28.

After the Hong Kong port visit, LAKE CHAMPLAIN was originally scheduled to proceed to Singapore for a third port visit before heading into the Arabian Gulf. As a result of

growing tension in the Gulf, the Battle Group was ordered to bypass Singapore and proceed at best speed directly to the Arabian gulf. Aside from slowing down occasionally to conduct several UNREPs, the Battle Group proceeded at nearly thirty knots to arrive at the Strait of Malacca on October 5th. Despite extremely thick smoke from the forest fires which were burning in Malaysia at the time, which reduced visibility in some areas to less than 100 yards, USS NIMITZ and LAKE CHAMPLAIN completed the straits transit using 20 and sometimes 25 knots. At the completion of the Strait of Malacca transit, LAKE CHAMPLAIN conducted a VERTREP with USNS YUKON as she and the carrier waited for the rest of the Battle Group to catch up.

Once the Battle Group was re-assembled, it again proceeded at best speed through the Indian Ocean. Chopping into Fifth Fleet on October 9, the Battle Group arrived at the Strait of Hormuz on the evening of October 11. That night, the Battle Group conducted a night transit of the Strait of Hormuz with LAKE CHAMPLAIN in the lead. Once inside the Arabian Gulf, the Battle Group proceeded to Bahrain where they anchored on October 12 at Bahrain Bell in preparation for the Fifth Fleet inchoop briefs which would be conducted onboard USS NIMITZ the next day.

Remaining at anchor for two days, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway early on the morning of October 14 to proceed to the Northern Arabian Gulf (NAG) to conduct operations with USS NIMITZ. After performing plane guard duties on October 15, the ship conducted an UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO before detaching from the carrier on October 18 to proceed back through the Strait of Hormuz to rendezvous with the USS PELELIU ARG in the Gulf of Oman. After rendezvousing on October 19, LAKE CHAMPLAIN led the ARG back through the Strait of Hormuz the next morning, after which she detached to return to her duties with USS NIMITZ in the NAG.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN continued her operations in the NAG until early November when, after completing an UNREP with USNS TIPPECANOE, detached to proceed to Dubai, UAE for her first port visit in the Gulf. Completing the one day transit, the ship moored late in the morning on November 3 at Port Rashid, Berth 28.

The port visit to Dubai was a very uneventful one with the exception of a breakfast which was hosted onboard on November 7 for the Commanding Officer and Executive Officer of HMS NOTTINGHAM, one of the British ships which was also moored in Dubai at the time. After a five day port visit, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway on the morning of November 8 to proceed back to the NAG to rendezvous with USS NIMITZ.

During this underway period, tensions with Iraq reached a high point as the Weapons Inspection teams were ordered to leave the country and Iraq threatened to shoot down the U.N. sponsored U2 flights. On November 14, the ship set flight quarters to

embark a British media team and a Navy combat photographer in the event that hostilities actually began. For most of the next week, the ship remained close to her launch position conducting flight quarters and small arms training. Finally, about a week later, as tensions began to ease, the ship returned to normal operations conducting a VERTREP with USNS SPICA, an UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO and plane guard duties with USS NIMITZ. Shortly thereafter, the ship flew-off the British media team and Navy combat photographer.

On November 29, the ship hosted a visit by the Honorable Dr. John Hamre, the Deputy Secretary of Defense who was accompanied by VADM T. B. Fargo, COMFIFTHFLT. The next day, the ship conducted an UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO and night DLQs with desert Duck 740. Finally, on December 1, the ship performed plane guard duties with USS GEORGE WASHINGTON before detaching to return to Dubai, UAE where she moored on December 3 at Port Rashid, Berth 28 for a second port visit.

The second port visit to Dubai was also uneventful with the exception of a call made by the Commander of the United Kingdom Task Group to VADM T. B. Fargo, COMFIFTHFLT in the Flag Cabin on December 4. Later that evening, the ship held the LAKE CHAMPLAIN Half-way party at the International Seafarer's Centre (Seaman's Center) in Dubai. At the end of the five day port visit, the ship got underway on December 8 enroute to the NAG.

Shortly after getting underway, the ship conducted a 5"/54 caliber gun pacfire and UNREP with USS SEATTLE before rendezvousing with the Battle Group to participate in a USS NIMITZ Battle Group PHOTOEX. After the PHOTOEX, LAKE CHAMPLAIN proceeded to rendezvous with USS GEORGE WASHINGTON to perform plane guard duties. After the plane guard duties, the ship proceeded on to the Northern Maritime Interception Operations (MIO) Opareas where she would perform MIO duties for the next three days.

During the transit north, LAKE CHAMPLAIN rendezvoused with USS NIMITZ to conduct a practice UNREP and USS SACRAMENTO and USNS SPICA to conduct an actual UNREP, CONREP, and VERTREP. The next day, the ship arrived in the MIO Opareas where she immediately conducted her first VBSS boarding of the merchant vessel BISMIHITA'LA. During each of the next two days, the VBSS teams conducted boardings of the merchant vessels STEVE II and IBN YOUNUS. At the end of the three days in the MIO Opareas, LAKE CHAMPLAIN was relieved by USS HARRY W. HILL and proceeded back to the NAG to conduct operations with USS NIMITZ.

Rendezvousing with the Battle Group, LAKE CHAMPLAIN conducted an UNREP and VERTREP with USS SEATTLE on December 20 and plane guard duties with USS NIMITZ on December 22. Shortly thereafter, she detached to proceed to Jebal Ali, UAE for a Christmas port visit. Completing the one day transit, the ship moored late in the morning on December 24 at Port Jebal Ali,

Berth 60. The ship was welcomed on the pier by ADM J. L. Johnson, Chief of Naval Operations; VADM T. B. Fargo, COMFIFTHFLT and the U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates who came aboard to wish the crew a "Merry Christmas."

This port visit was also relatively uneventful with the exception of Catholic Mass which was held onboard by the Fifth Fleet Priest on Christmas Day. At the end of the five day port visit, the ship got underway on the morning of December 29 to proceed back to the NAG. Conducting an UNREP with USNS TIPPECANOE and a VERTREP with USNS SPICA shortly after getting underway, LAKE CHAMPLAIN then proceeded north to rendezvous with USS GEORGE WASHINGTON with which she would conduct nightly plane guard duties throughout the end of the year.