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**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70)  
FPO AP 96671-1190

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From: Commanding Officer, USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70)  
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70) Command History

1. Pursuant to reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded.

*R. A. Route*  
R. A. ROUTE

**USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70)  
COMMAND HISTORY**

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

USS LAKE ERIE's mission is to conduct prompt and sustained combat operations at sea in support of a Carrier Battle Group or an Amphibious Ready Group.

The TICONDEROGA class cruiser is designed for a multiwarfare environment, which enables ships like LAKE ERIE to function in protective roles while still maintaining the ability to perform power projection ashore. LAKE ERIE has the ability to defend against coordinated attacks involving surface, subsurface, and airborne threats using the computerized AEGIS Combat Systems suite.

LAKE ERIE, homeported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, is commanded by Captain Ronald A. Route, USN. A member of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, her Immediate Superior in Command (ISIC) is Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Group ONE. Ship's Company is comprised of 360 officers and crew divided into five departments: Combat Systems, Operations, Engineering, Supply, and Navigation/Administration. Each department is comprised of various ratings, grouped into divisions. Each division is responsible for a specific area of operation within LAKE ERIE. In addition, LAKE ERIE is able to embark a Helicopter Detachment consisting of two Light Airborne Multi-Purpose System (LAMPS) MK III SH-60B helicopters, fully integrating their capabilities with those of the ship in the areas of Anti-Submarine Warfare and Anti-Surface Warfare.

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1994

### January

03-31 Post Shakedown Availability, Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard  
05 Undocking from dry dock  
26 Crew move aboard

### February

01-26 Post Shakedown Availability (continued)  
03-14 TOMAHAWK Weapons System Block III installation  
14-17 TOMAHAWK Weapons System material certification  
23 Fast cruise  
24 Post Shakedown Availability sea trial, Hawaiian OPAREA

### March

07-10 Deperming, Pearl Harbor, HI  
13-16 AEGIS Computer Baseline 5.0.2 upgrade  
14-16 Weapons onload, Naval Magazine Lualualei  
21-31 Tailored Ship Training Availability II, Hawaiian OPAREA

### April

05-29 CNO Project 623-2 Standard Missile Two Block IV Waterfront Integrated Testing, Pearl Harbor, HI

### May

02-06 Tailored Ship Training Availability III, Hawaiian OPAREA  
04 Accidental Firing of Close in Weapons System (CIWS) in Pearl Harbor  
09-20 Final Evaluation Period  
09-13 Logistics Management Assessment  
11-13 Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification  
21 Visit ship for Armed Forces Day  
25-31 RIMPAC - Multinational Exercise, Hawaiian OPAREA

### June

01-17 RIMPAC - Multinational exercise (continued)  
20-30 Combat Systems Readiness Review

## July

01 Combat Systems Readiness Review (continued)  
06-12 CNO Project 623-2 Standard Missile Two Block IV  
Developmental Test, Pacific Missile Test Facility  
(PMRF)  
21 Change of Command - CAPT R.A. Route relieves CAPT  
W.H. Parks  
25-31 CNO Project 623-1 Standard Missile Two Block IIIA  
Follow On Operational Test and Evaluation, PMRF

## August

12-18 Multi-sail enroute San Diego  
23 Weapons onload Seal Beach, California  
24-31 FLEETEX 94 3A - CONSTELLATION Battle Group/ESSEX  
Amphibious Ready Group, SOCAL OPAREA

## September

09 Aviation Readiness Evaluation  
12-18 FLEETEX 94 3B, SOCAL OPAREA  
19-22 FLEETEX 94 3C, SOCAL OPAREA  
24-29 Multi-sail enroute Pearl Harbor

## October

03-07 CNO Project 623-2 Standard Missile Two Block IV  
Developmental Test and Initial Operational Test and  
Evaluation, PMRF  
08-31 Pre-Overseas Movement Period

## November

01-07 Pre-Overseas Movement Period (continued)  
15 Deploy with CONSTELLATION Battle Group

## December

02-06 Exercise BEACHCREST 95-1 with United States Marine  
Corps vicinity Okinawa  
06-10 Port call Yokosuka, Japan  
13-14 Bilateral exercise with Republic of Korea Naval  
Forces  
15-17 Port call Pusan, Republic of Korea  
22-27 Port call Hong Kong  
31 Port call Singapore

## NARRATIVE

Early January marked the end of LAKE ERIE's dry dock period. On 5 January 1995, after two days of intensive preparations, LAKE ERIE was undocked from Dry Dock Four, Pearl Harbor Naval Ship Yard and escorted by tugs to Berth B17. The ship remained at B17 until the end of the Post Shakedown Availability.

The Post Shakedown Availability had two major objectives: (1), the correction of discrepancies discovered by the Board of Inspection and Survey during Final Contract Trials in November of 1994 and, (2), the programmed installation of new or modified systems not completed during construction. During an intense twelve week period, six new systems were installed, major upgrades were performed on an additional forty systems, and over four-hundred jobs were completed by ship's force. The intensity of the around-the-clock work schedule and the large amount of ship's spaces affected made LAKE ERIE virtually uninhabitable. As a result, LAKE ERIE Sailors were moved to a berthing barge where they could live and sleep away from the noise of the ongoing work. As soon as the major industrial work was completed and all berthing spaces onboard had been repainted, the crew of LAKE ERIE moved off the berthing barge and back onto their ship. With the crew aboard, work continued on remaining projects until sea trials, scheduled for 24 February 1994.

In preparing for sea trials, LAKE ERIE conducted a fast cruise 23 February 1994. A fast cruise simulates the ship being underway and provides an opportunity to verify the underway watch

organization, practice underway skills a little rusty from over three months inport, and rehearse some of the tests that would be required during sea trials the following day. On 24 February the crew took LAKE ERIE to sea under the watchful eye of numerous shipyard personnel, contractors, and government witnesses, each there to verify all availability work was completed correctly. All major systems were carefully tested or demonstrated and all performed superbly. LAKE ERIE's Post Shakedown Availability was complete and the training cycle for LAKE ERIE's upcoming deployment would soon begin.

March was a busy month for LAKE ERIE. On 7 March the ship travelled across Pearl Harbor to the deperming pier where it would remain until the 10th. Deperming is a process by which large electrical cables are wrapped around the ship and energized to reduce the magnetic signature the ship developed after remaining so long in one place during construction. With deperming complete, the ship again travelled across Pearl Harbor, this time to the Naval Magazine at Lualualei. From 14 to 16 March, the ship reloaded all the ammunition previously offloaded in preparation for Post Shakedown Availability. Concurrent with the ammunition onload, LAKE ERIE received a major AEGIS Weapon System computer baseline upgrade to version 5.0.2. This upgrade was the first step in preparing LAKE ERIE for participation in CNO Projects 623-1 and 623-2 to be conducted during July and August. The last week of March was dedicated to phase two of LAKE ERIE's Tailored Ship Training Availability (TSTA II). Assisted by several personnel from Afloat Training Group, Middle

Pacific, the crew spent an intense period developing the skills and training teams necessary to effectively train themselves. Having already established the requisite training teams onboard (Combat Systems Training Team, Engineering Casualty Control Training Team, Damage Control Training Team and the Seamanship/Navigation Training Team), this period focused on fine tuning their individual team training strategies. Drill development, performance evaluation, and team procedures received particular attention. The Afloat Training Group assist team ensured LAKE ERIE met all training requirements and guided the first few training scenarios.

Waterfront Integrated Testing (WIT) in preparation for CNO projects 623-1 and 623-2 dominated the month of April. Commencing 5 April with a week of equipment performance verification testing, WIT would continue until 29 April. Throughout the WIT process, every aspect of LAKE ERIE's combat system involved in the upcoming CNO Projects was thoroughly tested and exercised. Special modifications were installed to collect data and monitor the effects of launching a Standard Missile BLK IV.

April was also dedicated to training. Not only were LAKE ERIE's firing teams preparing for their part in the CNO Projects, the crew was making final preparations for phase three of Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA III). With all the training tools in place as a result of TSTA II, the crew conducted fast cruises every Tuesday and built on the concept of training themselves.

TSTA III was conducted from 2 to 6 May. This dedicated week of underway and inport training was specifically designed for the ship to fine tune its preparations for the Final Evaluation Period (FEP) and reinforce the concept of self training developed in TSTA II. LAKE ERIE conducted scenario driven shipwide integrated training which flexed all the shipboard training teams in training and self assessment.

On 4 May while conducting maintenance on LAKE ERIE's Close In Weapon System (CIWS) during an inport period of TSTA III, two 20mm rounds were accidentally discharged. A Judge Advocate General investigation was conducted by Commander, Destroyer Squadron THIRTY ONE which concluded that required CIWS pre and post-firing inspections had not been properly conducted and the rounds had gone undetected in the ammunition drive. The investigation also concluded that the rounds had most likely impacted harmlessly in an unpopulated area north of Aiea, Hawaii.

With TSTA III complete, LAKE ERIE entered into the Final Evaluation Period confident and prepared. This intense evaluation period was actually broken into three separate pieces. From the 9th to the 13th of May LAKE ERIE had its Logistics Management Assessment which thoroughly examined all facets of the ship's supply and maintenance functions. LAKE ERIE's success was a tribute to the attention and dedication of the entire Supply Department as well as the performance of the entire crew in maintenance performance and documentation. Next was the Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification. From the 11th to the 13th of May, an inspection team from the Pacific Fleet Cruise Missile



Office evaluated LAKE ERIE's ability to conduct operations with both the TOMAHAWK and HARPOON cruise missile. This was the culmination of months of training and LAKE ERIE's cruise missile team performed superbly. From the 16th to the 20th LAKE ERIE was underway for final evaluation of its training teams. Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific again sent personnel to sea to evaluate LAKE ERIE's ability to effectively train. This evaluation period increased in complexity as the days progressed. Driven by a long running scenario, all facets of LAKE ERIE's ability to conduct sustained operations in a variety of situations were observed. From peacetime steaming to full battle, LAKE ERIE's training teams and the entire crew were constantly challenged. Tasked to structure the entire training period, set goals, and evaluate standards of performance, the training teams were the cornerstone of LAKE ERIE's success.

Completion of this Final Evaluation Period marked the end of LAKE ERIE's tailored ship training and the beginning of operations with the Fleet. Under the command of Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group ONE, LAKE ERIE was a part of the USS CONSTELLATION (CV 64) Carrier Battle Group which participated in RIMPAC-94 from the 25th of May to the 17th of June. RIMPAC is a multi-national exercise conducted in the Pacific Ocean every two years. Participants in RIMPAC-94 included the CONSTELLATION Battle Group, the USS ESSEX (LHD 2) Amphibious Ready Group, the USS INDEPENDENCE (CV 62) Battle Group; and naval forces from Japan, Canada, Chile, and Australia. RIMPAC-94 was conducted primarily in the Hawaiian Operating Area but did reach as far

west as Midway Island. Driven by a complex geo-political scenario, the exercise escalated tensions, both military and political, throughout several fictitious island countries. For nearly three weeks the exercise provided an excellent arena for the development and evaluation of multi-national communications, tactics, and command and control.

As soon as RIMPAC-94 was over, technical representative from Fleet Technical Support Center Pacific arrived for LAKE ERIE's Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR) scheduled from 20 May to 1 July. CSRR examines every aspect of the combat system. From maintenance records to equipment performance specification; everything was examined, tested, and evaluated. Not only was it a thorough look at the state of the combat system but it was a tremendous way for LAKE ERIE to begin work ups for the CNO project to be conducted in July.

Nearly the entire month of July was dedicated to the first at-sea testing of the Standard Missile Two Block IV (SM-2 BLK IV) during CNO Project 623-2 and the evaluation of the Standard Missile Two Block IIIA (SM-2 BLK IIIA) during CNO Project 623-1. The initial phase of 623-2, conducted from the 6th to the 12th of July, was primarily dedicated to a complete technical review of the SM-2 BLK IV missile's ability to perform at sea. The tests were conducted under the direction of the AEGIS Program Manager at the Pacific Missile Test Facility on and around the northern Hawaiian island of Kauai. In several highly controlled scenarios, the SM-2 BLK IV was fired against a variety of targets presenting many different threat profiles. This initial phase of

the testing process was a resounding success. LAKE ERIE's firing teams performed superbly and the missile exceeded all expectations.

On 21 July Captain Ronald A. Route relieved Captain William H. Parks as Commanding Officer. The change of command ceremony was actually conducted a day earlier than scheduled due to the emergency sortie of all Pearl Harbor based ships. The sortie was required because of the danger presented by a hurricane located south of the islands. LAKE ERIE returned to port on the morning of 23 July after the hurricane failed to turn toward the island and passed safely well to the south.

Following the change of command, LAKE ERIE was back at sea off the coast of Kauai for CNO Project 623-1; SM-2 BLK IIIA Follow-on Operational Test and Evaluation (FOT&E). Directed by the Commander, Operational Test and Evaluation Force, this testing took place from 25 to 31 July and, unlike the SM-2 BLK IV technical review earlier in the month, was an intense evaluation of the SM-2 BLK IIIA missile in a "real world" operational environment. LAKE ERIE's firing teams were faced with scenarios that had not been previously disclosed, targets whose profiles were unknown, and a hostile EW environment. Despite these challenges, the firing teams engaged all assigned targets providing an excellent baseline for further evaluation of the SM-2 BLK IIIA missile.

With the CNO Projects completed for the time being, LAKE ERIE began to look ahead and focus on the upcoming FLEET Exercise with the CONSTELLATION Battle Group and ESSEX Amphibious Ready Group.

Transiting to San Diego with USS CHOSIN (CG 65) from the 12th to the 18th of August to join the CONSTELLATION, LAKE ERIE took advantage of the time to conduct Force Anti-Air Warfare Commander Training with CHOSIN and representatives from AEGIS Training Support Group, Pearl Harbor.

Following a brief onload of three surface to air missiles at Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach, CA, on the 23rd of August, LAKE ERIE sailed into the Southern California Operational Area to join the CONSTELLATION Battle Group and commence FLEETEX 94. FLEETEX 94, stretching from the 24th of August to the 22nd of September, was designed as a "graduation" exercise for the CONSTELLATION Battle group and ESSEX Amphibious Ready Group in preparation for their upcoming deployments. Structured similarly to RIMPAC 94, it also flexed communications and command and control and culminated in a successful live missile firing exercise at the Pacific Missile Test Center off the southern coast of California.

Immediately upon return to Pearl Harbor on the 29th of September, LAKE ERIE began final preparations for phase two of CNO Project 623-2; SM-2 BLK IV Developmental Test and Initial Operational Test and Evaluation (DT/IOT&E) to take place off the coast of Kauai from the 3rd to the 7th of October. A combined test and evaluation period under the auspices of the AEGIS Program Manager and Commander, Operation Test and Evaluation Force, this testing combined the same "real world" challenges previously encountered during SM-2 BLK IIIA testing in late July with a continuing technical review similar to the SM-2 BLK IV

firings in early July. Again the missile and LAKE ERIE's firing teams performance were outstanding.

The period from 8 October to 7 November was dedicated to Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) leave and upkeep. During this time the entire crew was provided the opportunity to take leave in either of two designated leave periods. On 8 November LAKE ERIE conducted a fast cruise to get the underway watch personnel back up to speed and on the 9th, LAKE ERIE spent a day at sea to ensure that all systems were "GO" for the deployment.

On 15 November LAKE ERIE departed Pearl Harbor in company with CHOSIN and USS CIMARRON (AO 177) and set sail on her maiden deployment. On 18 November the three ships rendezvoused with the rest of the CONSTELLATION Battle Group and began the transit to the Sea of Japan. From the 2nd to the 10th of December the CONSTELLATION Battle Group participated in Exercise BEACHCREST-95 in the vicinity of Okinawa. Exercise BEACHCREST-95 was predominantly an air warfare exercise with U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy aircraft as the major players. However, this exercise did provide LAKE ERIE with an excellent opportunity to exercise her Anti-Air Warfare team as she assumed duties as the Battle Group Anti-Air Warfare Commander (AW) until her departure on the 5th of May. From the 6th to the 10th of December LAKE ERIE was inport Yokosuka, Japan for some minor voyage repairs before continuing on to participate in a bi-lateral exercise with Republic of Korea Naval Forces. Following the exercises, the ships conducted a port visit to Pusan, South Korea from the 15th to the 17th of December. Departing Pusan on the 18th of

December, the battle group transited south to spend Christmas week in Hong Kong and to welcome in the New Year in Singapore.