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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70)
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From: Commanding Officer, USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Washington Navy Yard,
901 M Street SE, Washington, DC 20374-5060

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

COMBAT 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 multi-warfare 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 Undersea Warfare and Surface Warfare. With a helicopter detachment on board, total ship manning is near 400 personnel.

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1995

January

01-03 Port call Singapore
13-19 Port call Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates
19-22 Exercise IRON MAGIC 1995 with USS ESSEX ARG and UAE
Marines
23-30 Maritime Intercept Operations - M/V GULF SPLENDOUR

February

06-11 Exercise SHAREM 110 in Arabian Gulf
12-17 Exercise SHAREM 110 in Gulf of Oman
17-19 Port call Fujairah, UAE
24-28 Operation UNITED SHIELD

March

01-03 Operation UNITED SHIELD (continued)
04-21 TOMAHAWK Ready Strike Ship/Strike Coordinator,
Northern Red Sea
14-17 Port call Hurghada, Egypt
18-31 Rejoined USS CONSTELLATION Battlegroup/Transit to
Perth, Australia
30 Crossing the Line

April

01-06 Transit to Perth (continued)
07-11 Port call Perth and Fremantle, Australia
12-15 Timor Sea ASW Operations with HMAS ONSLOW
21-22 Transit to Darwin, Australia
22-26 Port call Darwin
27-30 Transit to Guam

May

01-02 Transit to Guam
03-05 Port call Guam
06-14 Transit to Pearl Harbor
14 Rescue at sea operation for MV SYBARITE
15 Arrival Pearl Harbor, end of deployment

June

05 Exterior Communications Groom
05-09 CNO Project Equipment Installation
16-19 Dependents Cruise and Port Visit, Kailua-Kona,
Hawaii
20-23 Pay Personnel Assistance Training Team Visit
23-30 Extended Tracking and Control Experiment CNO Project
1459 (U/W)

July

01 Immediate Superior in Command Shift -
COMCRUDESGRU THREE to COMCRUDESGRU ONE
24-25 Offload Naval Magazine Lualualei
25-27 WSN-5 Field Change 8 Testing,
TOMAHAWK CNO Project (U/W)

31 Selected Restricted Availability (SRA), Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard

August

01-31 Selected Restricted Availability (continued)

29-31 Aeronautical Shipboard Installation Representatives (ASIR) Tech Assist

September

01-29 Selected Restricted Availability (continued)

01 ASIR Tech Assist (continued)

11-15 ASIR

15 Aviation Assist Visit/Aviation Readiness Evaluation

19-27 Disbursing Examination

21-22 SRA Sea Trial

October

02-04 Weapons onload, NAVMAG Lualualei

05-10 CNO Project 1475 CEC/MOUNTAIN TOP Testing (U/W)

19-27 CNO Project 1475 CEC/MOUNTAIN TOP Testing (U/W)

30-31 Transit San Diego

November

01-05 Transit San Diego (continued)

06-07 Naval Fire Support, San Clemente Island

08-15 Training Availability San Diego

13-14 Air Traffic Control Radar Beacon System Identification Friend or Foe Military Special Equipment System (AIMS) Installation

14 Postal Inspection

16-21 Transit Pearl Harbor

December

01 Edward F. Ney Memorial Award Inspection

01-07 CNO Project 1475 CEC/MOUNTAIN TOP Testing (U/W)

11-13 Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) Phase II (IPT)

14-15 CART II (U/W)

16-31 Holiday Leave and Upkeep

NARRATIVE

LAKE ERIE celebrated New Year's Day in Singapore, already into the second month of her maiden deployment with the CONSTELLATION Battle Group. LAKE ERIE set sail the following day for the Indian Ocean, transiting through the Straits of Malacca and passing between Indonesia and the Nicobar Islands of India. Continuing through the Bay of Bengal and south of Sri Lanka, LAKE ERIE sailed past the southern tip of India and turned northwest to pass through the Lakshadweep Island Chain at the Nine Degrees Channel. Exiting the channel, LAKE ERIE proceeded across the Arabian Sea for the Gulf of Oman.

After the transit through the Straits of Hormuz, LAKE ERIE anchored off of Bahrain on 12 January for a day-long Naval Central Command in-chop brief. At the conclusion of the brief, the anchor was weighed and the ship continued on, ultimately to moor outboard of USS CAPE COD (AD 43) at Jebel Ali, a sprawling man-made port in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) near Dubai. While in Jebel Ali, voyage repairs were conducted on the reduction gear assembly of #1 Gas Turbine Generator.

With repairs to the generator complete, LAKE ERIE departed Jebel Ali on 19 January to rendezvous with the USS ESSEX (LHD 2) and USS MOUNT VERNON (LSD 39) for several days during Exercise IRON MAGIC. Simulated Naval Fire Support (NFS) was provided to UAE and US Marines on the coast of the UAE.

Early in the morning of 23 January, the Battle Group Commander directed LAKE ERIE to join USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG-48) in conducting Maritime Interception Operations (MIO) in the North Arabian Gulf. This action came subsequent to the discovery of the motor vessel,

GULF SPLENDOUR, which had violated the UN sanctions against Iraq. A coastal freighter, GULF SPLENDOUR was one of a growing number of small embargo runners specializing in the illegal transport of dates from Iraq. Official estimates show this crop produced in excess of one billion dollars in illegal revenue since the embargo was imposed on Iraq in 1990. After conducting an initial boarding and escorting the ship to the UAE, a prize crew led by CDR E. M. Boorda, LAKE ERIE's Executive Officer, was left aboard while LAKE ERIE escorted the ESSEX Amphibious Ready Group out of the Straits of Hormuz. Upon return to the GULF SPLENDOUR, LAKE ERIE turned over the embargo runner to USS KINKAID (DD-965). LAKE ERIE's participation in MIO ended on 30 January.

Exercise SHAREM 110 lasted from 6 - 17 February, and included the participation of USS DAVID R. RAY (DD-971), USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG-48), USS TOPEKA (SSN-754), and USNS SILAS BENT (T-AGS 26). Conducted inside the Arabian Gulf within thirty miles of the Iranian coastline for the first week, the purpose of the exercise was to explore the effectiveness of different tactics against an undersea threat in shallow waters (<50 fathoms). LAKE ERIE successfully fired three developmental, shallow water, exercise torpedoes against a "live" submarine, routinely conducted TACTAS operations in shallow water, and effectively integrated embarked SH-60B and SH-60F helicopters, both operating continuously from her flight deck. The second half of the exercise was conducted outside the Straits of Hormuz in the Gulf of Oman.

Immediately following SHAREM 110 and a brief port visit to Fujairah, UAE, LAKE ERIE transited to Somalia to provide ready NFS for the withdrawal of United Nations forces from Mogadishu. As

part of Operation UNITED SHIELD, LAKE ERIE operated with USS ESSEX (LHD 2), USS BELLEAU WOOD (LHA 3), USS OGDEN (LPD 5), USS FORT FISHER (LSD 40), and a coalition of British, French, Italian, Malaysian and Pakistani naval units. LAKE ERIE not only provided the ability to project power ashore but also assisted through the tactical employment of the embarked SH-60B helicopters. Additionally, the ship's Cryptologic Technicians played an important role in support of the overall operation. Ultimately, the ship was awarded the Joint Meritorious Unit Award for her participation in the operation.

Following the conclusion of UNITED SHIELD, LAKE ERIE was ordered to the northern Red Sea to assume a TOMAHAWK Ready Strike posture. Prior TLAM exercises had prepared LAKE ERIE's strike teams for this role, which lasted from 9 to 17 March. After this operation, LAKE ERIE was allowed to make a port call in Hurghada, Egypt. A delay in receipt of diplomatic clearance delayed the stop, but once cleared, a pleasant port visit was made that is not often enjoyed by Pacific theater ships.

Departing the Red Sea, LAKE ERIE made its way past Yemen and into the Arabian Sea enroute to the CONSTELLATION Battle Group and an Equator crossing on the way to Australia. On 30 March, the ship's company entered the Realm of Neptunus Rex and the Ancient Order of the Deep and after much ceremony, all "slimy Pollywogs" were expunged in favor of the "trusty Shellbacks."

LAKE ERIE arrived in Perth, Western Australia, on 7 April for five days of liberty before taking part in a five-day exercise in the Timor Sea commencing on 16 April. The employment was in shallow water active sonar trials sponsored by the Australian

Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO). Other units involved were HMAS ONSLOW and FRV SOUTHERN SURVEYOR. The goals were to record active sonar performance in the Timor Sea, and to evaluate modified shaped CW wave forms developed by the Naval Undersea Warfare Center for the AN/SQS-53C Sonar. From the extensive data collected, it was determined that shallow water towed array operations were validated for detection of a snorkeling diesel submarine, shallow water ASW is site specific, and that search and detection are possible in areas of high reverberation.

On 22 April, LAKE ERIE enjoyed Australian hospitality for another five days that were spent inport at Darwin. A 30-member color guard detachment paraded in ANZAC Day (Australia-New Zealand Army Corps) ceremonies, and approximately 3000 visitors toured the ship.

Departing Darwin, LAKE ERIE continued on to Guam, crossing the Timor and Banda Seas and weaving through the islands of Indonesia. Rounding the western tip of New Guinea, LAKE ERIE finally returned to the Pacific Ocean. Arriving in Guam, the ship offloaded its TOMAHAWK missiles and met nineteen family members who would enjoy a "Tiger Cruise" back to Pearl Harbor. However, the return to Pearl Harbor would not be without event.

Early in the afternoon of 14 May, one day prior to the end of her maiden deployment, LAKE ERIE received a summons to assist Coast Guard Group Honolulu with the rescue efforts of M/V SYBARITE. SYBARITE, a civilian pleasure craft enroute from Australia to Hawaii, had developed two breaches to the hull and was in danger of foundering 250 nautical miles southwest of Oahu. Despite three days of efforts by its crew of four to use damage control equipment

air-dropped by the Coast Guard, SYBARITE's condition was not improving. LAKE ERIE closed the pleasure craft at best speed, and when within helicopter range, launched one of the SH-60B helicopters from HSL-37 Detachment 9. With the onset of darkness, worsening seas, the continuing deterioration of the craft, and three days of accumulating fatigue setting in, the crew of SYBARITE elected to abandon the vessel when HSL-37 arrived overhead. With the assistance of a rescue swimmer, all four civilians were recovered without event. On 15 May, LAKE ERIE joyously returned to Pearl Harbor to an enormously warm welcome and completed her very successful maiden deployment.

After post-deployment leave and upkeep, ship's force supported five days of CNO Project 1459 equipment installations. On 16 June, LAKE ERIE took family and friends on a Dependents Cruise to Kona, Hawaii, where the ship anchored out and opened herself to seemingly never-ending numbers of tourists throughout the weekend.

LAKE ERIE was underway 23 - 30 June to participate in CNO Project 1459, Extended Tracking and Control Experiment. This project focused on the ability of sea-based units to operate in a Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (TBMD) role. To support the project, LAKE ERIE required a specially modified AEGIS computer program to enable the SPY Radar to track high-altitude trajectories. In this pioneering experiment, LAKE ERIE tracked a theater ballistic missile from the instant it broke the ship's radar horizon in excess of 350 nm, through splashdown 20nm from the ship. The two watch teams trained for the events performed exceptionally well and received specific praise from Rear Admiral Rempt, the OPNAV Director for Theater Air Defense, who was embarked

on LAKE ERIE for the most significant portion of the project. The follow-on implication for the Navy, resulting from the unqualified success of the testing, includes the development of an increasingly important new TBMD mission area.

On 24 July, LAKE ERIE headed up the channel to Naval Magazine Lualualei to offload ammunition and missiles in preparation for the two-month Selected Restricted Availability (SRA). The offload lasted two days and was followed by a two-day return to sea to test modifications to the AN/WSN-5 inertial navigation equipment, which supports TOMAHAWK missile at-sea alignments.

LAKE ERIE entered its first Selected Restricted Availability (SRA-01) under tight constraints. The availability commenced on 31 July and ended 29 September. Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard was originally assigned as the primary maintenance facility, but was unable to support the requirements. This resulted in a last-minute change. Puget Sound Naval Shipyard flew their workers, foremen and managers to Pearl Harbor for their first repair of an AEGIS cruiser.

Over fifteen other repair organizations joined Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in LAKE ERIE's repair efforts: Naval Intermediate Maintenance Facility (NAVIMFAC) Pearl Harbor, Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Port Hueneme, and a dozen other private contractors. Close coordination of the repair work was critical to LAKE ERIE's ability to complete the availability on time.

In the course of the availability most of the ship's berthing became uninhabitable due to the deck work and open fuel tanks. Ship's force moved to the Naval Station Bachelor Enlisted Quarters

and received their meals at the Naval Station Galley since deck work in the ship's galley closed the serving line.

The major project of SRA-01 was installation of prototype equipment to support the Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC) project. The CEC equipment provides LAKE ERIE with a high data rate link far superior to previous capabilities. The bulk of the installation, a 7000-pound communication shelter, was placed adjacent to the forward exhaust stacks on the O-4 level. LAKE ERIE's main mast was strengthened and modified to support the weight of the new CEC antenna. New waveguides and cabling were also run to support the equipment.

The Engineering department also received work on a myriad of projects. Installations included a new escape trunk door in the JP-5 pump room and a new dishwasher in the scullery. Cleaning and inspection was conducted on waste heat boilers, condensate drain coolers, and lube oil strainers. Air ejectors in the distilling plant were replaced as well as the ship's hot water heaters, and alterations were made to the refrigeration system. SIMA San Diego conducted quick repairs on #1 Gas Turbine Generator. Cracks in the superstructure were welded, liferafts replaced, and the flight deck and O-3 level were resurfaced.

For Combat Systems there were installations of new CIWS ammunition lockers, new blast doors for the sonobuoy storeroom, topside Link-16 equipment and a new TACAN antenna. Repairs were made to the AN/SPQ-9 radar dome and ammunition elevators. Both vertical launchers were resurfaced and numerous ORDALTS were made to the AEGIS combat system.

Overall, SRA-01 was a complete success in terms of cooperation between the ship and repair facilities, completion of work one week ahead of schedule, and the safety awareness that resulted in zero mishaps. LAKE ERIE emerged from the availability on time and ready to participate in CEC testing in October.

In September, the Aviation Readiness Evaluation (ARE) and Aeronautical Shipboard Installation Representatives (ASIR) were scheduled on board to review the state of training, qualification and proficiency of personnel, and the material condition of facilities and equipment associated with air operations. An Aviation Assist Visit (AAV) was scheduled prior to the ARE to assess the level of preparedness. LAKE ERIE's AAV was so successful it was upgraded to an ARE qualification.

LAKE ERIE returned to NAVMAG Lualualei 2 October for a three-day ammunition onload. The SRA was complete and the ship was looking forward to two underway periods in October in support of CNO PROJECT 1475, Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC) MOUNTAIN TOP. These underway periods (05-10 and 19-27 October) were spent in preparation for a January 1996 live-fire exercise to validate the ability of off-ship sensors to cue and support terminal illumination of a STANDARD Missile engagement against low altitude/high speed targets. Numerous rehearsals of Naval Fire Support (NFS) were likewise conducted during these two underway periods in preparation for the November NFS qualifications to be completed at San Clemente Island off Southern California. The range facilities for both objectives were provided by the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) on the northwest coast of Kauai.

On 30 October, LAKE ERIE set sail for Southern California to qualify in NFS. LAKE ERIE's NFS team had labored for more than seventy hours in October conducting practice fire missions in preparation for the exercise. The NFS Team, Gun Crews and 5"/54 Gun Mounts performed flawlessly during the exercise, ensuring LAKE ERIE received high marks in all missions. In two days, Mounts 51 and 52 fired more than 300 rounds onto San Clemente Island for Naval Fire Support missions and spotter services.

On 6 November, the first day of NFS missions, tragedy struck LAKE ERIE. Late that morning, LCDR William Douglas Winegar, the Combat Systems Officer and a plankowner, suffered a severe heart attack and had to be flown ashore for help. Despite the remarkable speed and professionalism of LAKE ERIE's crew in providing CPR, stretcher bearer assistance, and preparations for flight quarters for MEDEVAC, LCDR Winegar did not survive.

Following the NFS qualifications, LAKE ERIE spent a week inport San Diego to provide liberty and opportunities to put personnel through schools not offered in Pearl Harbor. On 16 November, LAKE ERIE made the six-day transit back to her homeport arriving for the Thanksgiving holiday.

LAKE ERIE set sail on 01 December for final rehearsals of CNO PROJECT 1475, CEC Mountain Top. The training conducted during the two periods in October and this first week of December bore fruit in January 1996 with four very successful live-fire runs and the completion of all test objectives.

LAKE ERIE hosted personnel from Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific (ATG MIDPAC) for the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training Phase II (CART II) during the week of 11 to 15 December.

The purpose of CART II is to assess the condition of an afloat command's administrative, operational and material requirements in all departments. This assessment determines the extent and pace required in the subsequent Tailored Ship's Training Availability periods. At week's end, LAKE ERIE was determined to be well ahead of the nominal training schedule in most evaluated areas by ATG MIDPAC. Immediately following completion of CART II, LAKE ERIE commenced the holiday standdown for the remainder of 1995.