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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 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Command History Narrative  
(2) Chronology  
(3) Biography of Commanding Officer  
(4) 3 ½ inch disc with copy of Command History Narrative  
and chronology

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are forwarded.

*John J. Hammerer, Jr.*  
JOHN J. HAMMERER, JR.

# **2000 USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70)**

## **COMMAND HISTORY NARRATIVE**

“All is secure” aboard LAKE ERIE, entering the New Year 2000. LAKE ERIE began the year moored at Naval Station, Pearl Harbor, enjoying a post deployment and holiday leave period. On 6 January LAKE ERIE took a Dependents Day Cruise to the island of Maui. The ship anchored at Lahaina for four days and enjoyed the beautiful sights of Maui. Many in the crew watched the Mercedes Golf Championship with friends and family. The holiday leave period ended 18 January and the ship prepared for a four month Drydock Ship Restricted Availability (DSRA).

On 31 January, in preparation for the shipyard maintenance availability, LAKE ERIE moved to a 3-section shift work organization. The ship organized to accomplish work 24 hours a day throughout the DSRA period. The crew moved into living facilities aboard a berthing barge on 15 February. LAKE ERIE entered Dry Dock 4 at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard on 16 February.

During the DSRA, LAKE ERIE received a significant upgrade to its Command, Control, Communications, and Computer Information (C4I) capability. The C4I install provided the ship with continuous SHF connectivity for classified and unclassified email and Internet use, as well as Video Satellite (VSAT) teleconference capabilities for the Theater Ballistic Missile Defense testing. LAKE ERIE also received the Navy’s IT21 install which increased the number of computers onboard and upgraded the ship’s Local Area Network software and hardware. The entire hull and superstructure was preserved and painted during the yard period. LAKE ERIE was fitted with the AEGIS Light Exoatmospheric Projectile (LEAP) Intercept (ALI) system for Navy Theater Wide use.

LAKE ERIE spent the whole month of March in dry dock. On 7 March, ADM Fargo, Commander In Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet visited the ship. ADM Fargo, a U.S. Naval Academy graduate of 1970, presented the “Class of ‘70 Leadership Awards” to GSE2(SW) [REDACTED] and LTJG [REDACTED] for outstanding performance in duties and, most notably, as leaders. On 14 March, RADM Meyer (ret), “Father of AEGIS,” visited the ship to address the LAKE ERIE AEGIS LEAP Intercept (ALI) Team. RADM Hart Jr., new Battle Group Commander, made his first visit to LAKE ERIE as Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group ONE on 22 March.

Throughout March, training was conducted with the ALI team in preparation for TBMD events later in the year. Training Team coordination meetings were also held at Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific in preparation for the upcoming training cycle. The pre-undocking conference for leaving Dry Dock 4 was held 30 March.

The coordination meeting for PACIFIC BLITZ, a challenging live missile tracking event, was held on 04 April. On 11 April, RADM Antinitis, Commander Space Warfare Systems visited the ship. Also, the ship did a dead stick berth shift out of Dry Dock 4 to berth Bravo 13 in Pearl Harbor. 13 April, RADM Baugh, Commander Naval Sea Systems visited the ship. The ship moved out of 3-section shift work into a normal working day rotation. CAPT Capello and the Flight Test Round 1 (FTR-1) Firing Team left for Moorestown, New Jersey 27 April. The FTR-1 Team trained at the AEGIS Readiness Training Center to prepare for the upcoming SM-3 missile shot later in the year.

A Fast Cruise was conducted on 9 May to flex the Blue/Gold Watchbills and to conduct basic training as LAKE ERIE entered the Basic Training Phase. The ship accomplished the Search and Rescue Training Team Evaluation (SRTTE), the Aviation Certification and Aviation Readiness Evaluation the first two weeks in May. The material and manning inspections validated the ship's ability to rescue a man overboard and to conduct helicopter operations at sea.

LAKE ERIE got underway on 11 May to conduct degaussing checks, a Global Positioning System test, the Tactical Air Navigation (TACAN) certification, and the Engineering Light-Off Assessment. LAKE ERIE was back in port the next day to prepare for PACIFIC BLITZ exercises later in the month.

LAKE ERIE got underway on 30 May - 9 June to Pacific Missile Range Facility, Kauai, for PACIFIC BLITZ, a challenging live missile tracking exercise in support of Theater Missile Defense. LAKE ERIE made substantial contributions to the Surface Warfare Development Group TACMEMO on Navy Theater Missile Defense.

Concurrently with the TBMD project, LAKE ERIE continued to participate in the training cycle. LAKE ERIE completed the Commander's Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) II at the end of June successfully and began training at the Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) level.

LAKE ERIE was inport for the first two weeks of July. On 9 July, RADM Cobb, RADM Paige, RADM Meyer (ret), and RADM Altwegg visited the ship prior to the FTR-1 mission held in the second week of July.

In support of the TBMD program, LAKE ERIE was underway 11-15 July and conducted FTR-1. The FTR-1 mission was conducted at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) Kauai, HI. Live targets were not involved in the test firing; LAKE ERIE detected and tracked a Dynamic Test Track (DTT) that was generated and "injected" into the ship's ALI system. LAKE ERIE then engaged the ballistic missile DTT with a prototype SM-3 standard missile that was specially designed for exoatmospheric flight and destruction of ballistic missiles.

During the first three days of FTR-1, the ship rehearsed the firing run, coordinating the procedures for the actual missile firing. The firing run demanded exacting orchestration between LAKE ERIE, PMRF, and the aircraft surveying the missile range, as well as between the ship's watch standers in the Combat Information Center (CIC), on the Bridge, and the Vertical Launch Missile System (VLS).

The actual FTR-1 missile shot was conducted 14 July and the firing run was flawless. An SM-3 missile was successfully launched from the aft VLS magazine.

RADM Cobb personally recognized the "superb performance exhibited by LAKE ERIE during the Navy Theater Wide TBMD, ALI project FTR-1. The professionalism and 'can-do' attitude you [LAKE ERIE] demonstrated during both the installation of the ALI project equipment and conduct of the mission was outstanding. ... LAKE ERIE can be justifiably proud of her significant contribution to the future of the Navy."

LAKE ERIE returned to port on 16 July for upkeep and preparations for a 6-week underway for the West Coast. On 28 July, the ship was underway for San Diego, California. During the underway, the ship concentrated on Engineering Drills, Main Space Fire training, and Seamanship Training. While in San Diego LAKE ERIE welcomed aboard LCDR Dave Welch, who relieved CDR John W. Ailes V as Executive Officer on 10 August. On 12 August, the Blue/Gold Study team arrived; a complement of CAPT Whipple, CDR [REDACTED], CDR [REDACTED], LCDR [REDACTED]. They arrived onboard to do follow-up studies on the innovative Blue/Gold organization onboard LAKE ERIE during the training cycle.

Traditionally, ships underway have operated in a rotating watch basis, not allowing for either a set work routine or large blocks of time for leisure and sleep. Blue-Gold divides the Officers and Crew into two, equal teams, the Blue team and the Gold team, and provides for a routine work and watch schedule as well as a large, continuous block of time for rest and personal development.

During a 12-hour shift, one team is "on-duty" and is responsible for the daily routine of the ship, standing all the watches and carrying out all special evolutions. The off duty section is free for 12 hours and can use the time to e-mail, work out, study for personal and professional advancement, or sleep.

On 14 August, LAKE ERIE got underway for operations in the SOCAL Operating Area. The ship demonstrated Naval Surface Fire Support excellence with superb live fire performance at San Clemente Island, CA, resulting in NSFS qualification to two complete teams (Blue/Gold) scoring a total of 96.8. For over 24 hours, LAKE ERIE participated in fire missions delivering 497 rounds onto targets while controlling aircraft in support of Suppression of Enemy Air Defense.

LAKE ERIE arrived in Port Hueneme on 16 August, for a visit to Naval Surface Warfare Center. The ship received technical assistance with Combat Systems and Underway Replenishment equipment. Outstanding training was conducted on land-based UNREP rigs at Port Hueneme. LAKE ERIE departed California on 21 August for liberty in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. The ship anchored off of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico on 24-28 August for a liberty port visit. The ship departed for Pearl Harbor on 28 August and arrived in Pearl Harbor on 4 September. The ship picked up ATGPAC Engineering observers and put to sea to conduct an Engineering Qualification. Following the successful EQUAL, LAKE ERIE returned to port on 5 September to prepare for a joint Undersea Warfare exercise with the United Kingdom Navy.

In September, this year LAKE ERIE strengthened ties with Ohio communities in and around Lake Erie by participating in events commemorating the Battle of Lake Erie at Put-In Bay, Ohio on South Bass Island on 9-10 September 9. CAPT Capello, Commanding Officer, USS LAKE ERIE, and the LAKE ERIE Honor Guard represented the ship in the 187<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the battle.

Captain Capello addressed the Toledo Navy League at a dinner in Put-in-Bay on Friday, 9 September. The following day, a Celebration Parade was held on South Bass. The parade ended at Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, a national monument. The Doric column, rising 352 feet over Lake Erie, honors Perry's victory and also celebrates the mutual trust and peace between the United States and Canada.

After the parade, a commemoration of the battle and a groundbreaking ceremony for the new visitor's center were held at the base of the memorial. The LAKE ERIE Honor Guard presented the colors during the ceremony in which distinguished speakers, including Congressman Paul Gillmor, 5th District of Ohio, gave remarks.

On 29 September, the HMS CORNWALL Wardroom from the UK Navy visited the ship for a tour and to make preparations for Navy Task Group (NTG) 2000, a joint USW exercise. LAKE ERIE was underway in the Hawaiian OPAREA 04-07 October, operating closely with HMS CORWALL, HMS SUTHERLAND, HMS NEWCASTLE, RFA BAYLEAF, RFA FORT VICTORIA, FS ACONIT, USS O'KANE AND USNS YUKON. LAKE ERIE acted as SAU Commander and demonstrated the highest levels of proficiency in tracking and engaging opposing submarines. This performance was highlighted by LAKE ERIE's assignment as tactical commander for USW live weapon firings.

LAKE ERIE returned to port on 7 October and received a combat systems groom on the entire AEGIS system. 22-28 October the ship participated in the Surface Line Week in Pearl Harbor and was able to finish in Second Place overall. Waterfront Integration Testing continued after the Combat Systems groom in preparations for FTR-1A earlier next year.

In the first week of November, LAKE ERIE conducted a Dependents Day Cruise to the Big Island. Enroute the ship conducted a very unusual ceremony: off the Kona Coast, IS1(SW/AW) [REDACTED] was married to the former [REDACTED] in a ceremony on the foc'sle. A traditional wedding garland was hoisted at the main mast, and LT [REDACTED], Command Chaplain, officiated the special event. Captain Capello and several guests were in attendance for this unique occasion. While anchored at Kona, Friends and family members of the ship were able to enjoy the sights and scenery of the Big Island. The ship returned to Pearl Harbor on 6 November.

LAKE ERIE continued to train during the training cycle. Afloat Training Group Final Evaluation Integration Training was held on 20 November to prepare for the FEP scenario early the next year.

The first LAKE ERIE Captain's Cup Sports day was held on 22 November. The ship assembled teams for basketball, golf, softball, and bowling to compete against each other. The Wardroom team won the first Captain's Cup.

On 30 November, RADM McCarthy visited the ship.

On 4 December, CAPT John J. Hammerer Jr., Prospective Commanding Officer, reported for duty. Turnover was conducted 4-11 December. On 5 December, the ship got underway in the Hawaiian OPAREA to demonstrate some of the ship's capabilities to CAPT Hammerer. Most notably, the ship sailed in the channel between Molokai, Maui and Lanai. The bridge observed the sunrise over Haleakala on the morning of 6 December, before returning to Pearl Harbor that afternoon.

7-12 December LAKE ERIE put the final touches on the ship for the Change of Command. On 12 December at 1500, Captain John J. Hammerer, Jr. relieved Captain Leonard Capello as Commanding Officer, USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70). RADM William Cobb, Program Executive Officer, Theater Surface Combatants (PEO TSC) served as guest speaker, and presented Captain Capello with the Navy's Legion of Merit for his successful tour as Commanding Officer.

Holiday Stand down started on 14 December. LAKE ERIE would end stand down on 15 January 2001.

# 2000 USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70) COMMAND HISTORY TIMELINE

**January** 1 - 6 Inport upkeep. Holiday/POM stand-down.

1 New Year's Day observed.

6 Underway for Dependent's Cruise to Maui. Anchored off Lahaina, Maui.

10 Return to Pearl Harbor from Maui.

12 - 15 Inport upkeep. Holiday stand-down.

13 DSRA Coordination Meeting.

18 Holiday and POM stand-down ends.

18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day observed.

19 Underway Lualualei for ammo offload.

28 Rotary Club Breakfast onboard LAKE ERIE.

31 Ship goes to 3-section shift work during DSRA. Duty Section on weekends. Ship's Galley closes while in shipyard.

**February** 8 Star of the Sea Middle School Tour.

15 Crew Move-Off Complete. Living facilities in Berthing Barge.

16 Berth shift to Dry Dock 4, Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard for DSRA.

16-11 April Dry Dock 4 for DSRA

17 Shipyard Production Meeting.

24 Waste Heat Boiler Inspection. Ship's Electronic Readiness Team Meeting. Glass and Pulp Processing Meeting.

25 IT-21 Inbrief.

**March** 6 TRMS (CASREP.SORTS) Training. Work Authorization Tag Out Training. CO Meeting with SPAWARSYSACT PAC.

7 ADM Fargo, CINCPACFLT visit and presentation of the Class of '70 Award. Optimized SNAP Install Meeting.

9 Blue/Gold Command Training.

10 ADNS Brief.

14 RADM Meyer (ret), Father of AEGIS, visits. Addresses AEGIS LEAP Intercept Team.

16 PAO Hometown News Release visit.

	21	ALI Firing Plan Meeting.
	22	RADM Hart, COMCRUDESGRU ONE, visits.
	24	Shipboard Training Teams training ATGMIDPAC (ETT/DCTT/CSTT/SNTT)
	28	AEGIS core/SPY Doctrine training – ATRCD
	29	Command Retention Team Meeting.
	30	Pre-undocking conference.
<b>April</b>	4	Pacific Blitz Coordination Meeting.
	11	RADM Antinitis, SPAWARSSYSCOM, visits. Dead Stick Undock/Berth shift from Dry Dock 4 to Bravo 13.
	13	RADM Baugh, NAVSEASYSYSCOM, visits.
	17	3 Section Shiftwork ends.
	27	FTR-1 Crew Training Moorestown, New Jersey. Optimized SNAP Install.
<b>May</b>	9	Fast Cruise. Engineering LOA caucus.
	11 - 12	Underway Hawaiian OPAREA: Degaussing checks, WRN-6 Self test, TACAN recert, Engineering Light-Off Assessment.
	12	Inport Pearl Harbor.
	17	DSRA Lessons Learned Meeting
	18	Retention Team Meeting. Inclination Inbrief.
	21-23	Underway Pearl Harbor OPAREA.
	23	Inport Pearl Harbor.
	25	SRTT Qualification.
	30 - 9 Jun	Underway PMRF PAC Blitz.
	30	WSN-7 NAVCERT.
	31	Linebacker/ADCP/Link 16 Interoperability Test. PAC Blitz rehearsal.
<b>June</b>	2	PAC Blitz.
	9	Offload SM-2, onload IOM. PAC Blitz Hot Washup. Inport Pearl Harbor.
	19	Underway, Western Pacific Deployment.
	20	Thomas Ward "Make A Wish" Foundation tour.

26-30 Underway Hawaiian OPAREA CART II.

30 Waterfront Integration Test. WIT and CART II outbrief.

**July** 01-11 Inport/Upkeep Pearl Harbor

09 Ship tours for RADM Cobb, Paige, Meyer, and Altwegg

11 Underway Hawaiian OPAREA/PMRF FTR-1

12 FTR-1 Dry Run and VSAT readiness testing

13 FTR-1 Full Dress Rehearsal

14 FTR-1 Mission and AEGIS LEAP Intercept EMI Big Bang Test

15 Underway Pearl Harbor and Inport Pearl Harbor

16-28 Inport/Upkeep Pearl Harbor

28 Jul-03 Aug Underway San Diego

**August** 03-14 Inport/Upkeep San Diego, CA

05-08 XO/PXO Turnover

12 Blue-Gold Study Team Arrive (CAPT Whipple, CDR [REDACTED], CDR [REDACTED], LCDR [REDACTED])

14 Underway San Diego OPAREA NSFS San Clemente Island

14-16 Underway Port Hueneme

16-21 Inport/Upkeep Port Hueneme

21-24 Underway Puerto Vallarta.

24 Anchored Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

24-28 Liberty Port: Puerto Vallarta.

28 Aug-05 Sep Underway Pearl Harbor.

**September** 05Sep -03 Oct Inport/Upkeep Pearl Harbor

10 Commemoration of the Battle of Lake Erie, Put-In Bay, Ohio

29 HMS Cornwall Wardroom Tour of LAKE ERIE. NTG 2000 Preparation Briefs.

**October** 02 NTG 2000 Pre-sail conference.

03 Underway Hawaiian OPAREA NTG 2000.



04-07 NTG 2000.

07 Underway Pearl Harbor.

07 Oct-02 Nov Inport/Upkeep Pearl Harbor.

12 MBRV-2/TCMP-3B Planning Meeting.

16 ECWS (SPY and C+D skid) Groom  
Computer and SIGPRO Groom  
VLS Groom

22-28 Surface Line Week  
WIT – FTR-1A Equipment I/C

30 WIT Testing, IOM Integration Testing

**November 02** Underway Kona, Hawaii; Dependents Cruise.

02-06 Anchored Kona, Hawaii Dependents Cruise.

06 Nov-05 Dec Inport/Upkeep Pearl Harbor.

06 WIT IOM Integration. ALI Testing.

15 QLRV Scenario Certification Brief

20 ATG Final Evaluation Problem Integration Training

22 Captain's Cup Sports Day

30 RADM McCarthy visits.  
LAKE ERIE Christmas Party Hale Koa.

**December 04** CAPT Hammerer arrives onboard.

04-11 CO/PCO Turnover.

05 Underway Hawaiian OPAREA CO/PCO Turnover.

06 Underway Pearl Harbor.

06 Dec -22 Jan Inport/Upkeep Pearl Harbor.

12 Change of Command. CAPT John J. Hammerer Jr. assumes command  
of USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70).

12-14 FTR-1A MCP.

15 Dec RADM Conway (MIDPAC) visits.

14 Dec-15 Jan Holiday Stand Down