



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

U.S.S. AMERICA (CVA-66)

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1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosure (1) is forwarded.

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COMNAVAIRLANT (PAO)

USS AMERICA (CVA-66)

HISTORY

1973

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## CHRONOLOGY OF HIGHLIGHTS

1973

- 22 JAN Rear Admiral Wesley L. McDONALD, Commander Carrier Division THREE, visits AMERICA
- 28 JAN First day of the Cease Fire in Viet Nam
- 31 JAN Commander Jim A. JOY was relieved by Commander Robert W. JEWELL, Jr., as Commander of Air Wing EIGHT
- 31 JAN Vice Admiral Damon W. COOPER, Commander Task Force SEVENTY-SEVEN, visits AMERICA for the Change of Command Ceremony
- 11 FEB Vice Admiral Damon W. COOPER, Commander Task Force SEVENTY-SEVEN, visits AMERICA to give us a well done on our WESTPAC Cruise
- 19 FEB Rear Admiral J. S. CHRISTIANSEN, Commander Carrier Division SEVEN, departs AMERICA
- 24 FEB Equator Crossing - 900 slimy, scurvy, greasy Pollywogs initiated into the Realm of Neptunis Rex
- 22 MAR Rear Admiral Joseph P. MOORER, Commander Carrier Division SIX, visits AMERICA
- 22 MAR Arrival at Mayport, Florida to offload part of the Air Wing and to pickup teenage sons of America Officers and Men
- 24 MAR Arrival at Pier 12, NOB, Norfolk, Virginia, ending AMERICA's sixth extended deployment since commissioning
- 9 APR Annual Catherine T. McDONALD Award is presented to Lieutenant (J.G.) Mark J. STULL and Master Chief Fire Control Technician Tommy V. RATHBONE
- 11 APR Captain T. H. REPLOGLE relieved Captain B. H. SHEPHERD as Commanding Officer, USS AMERICA. Immediately after the change of command ceremony Captain SHEPHERD assumed the rank of Rear Admiral
- 11 APR Admiral Ralph W. COUSINS, Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet, is guest speaker at AMERICA Change of Command.
- 23 APR Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) Mr. Donald BRAZIER, his wife and his son visit AMERICA
- 1 JUN Commander E. Hawley BROOKS relieved Commander Georges E. LeBLANC, Jr., as Executive Officer, USS AMERICA

- 12 JUN Rear Admiral B. H. SHEPHERD, Deputy Inspector General of the Navy, visits AMERICA
- 26 AUG The AMERICA Ships Picnic was held at the Fleet Recreation Center
- 27 AUG Vice Admiral Frederick H. MICHAELIS, Commander Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, visits AMERICA
- 28 AUG AMERICA plays host to owners of National Football League Teams; Mr. ROBBIE (Miami Dolphins), Mr. WILLIAMS (Washington Redskins), Mr. BIDEILL (St. Louis Cardinals), Mr. TOSE (Philadelphia Eagles), Mr. MODELL (Cleveland Browns), Mr. HALAS (Chicago Bears), and Mr. WINTER (Minnesota Vikings). Accompanying them was Rear Admiral Emmett H. TIDD, Commander Naval Recruiting Command
- 28 AUG Rear Admiral John M. TIERNEY, Commander Tactical Electronic Warfare Wing, Pacific Fleet, visits AMERICA
- 29 AUG The 100,000th landing aboard AMERICA was made by Lieutenant Commander Lewis R. NEWBY with Lieutenant Commander Ronnie B. BAKER flying AMERICA's own C-1A, MISS AMERICA
- 10 SEP Rear Admiral Lawrence R. GEIS, Deputy COMNAVAIRLANT for Tactical Air, breaks his flag aboard AMERICA to assist us with our training and our Operational Readiness Exercise (ORE)
- 14-16 SEP Visit of the Secretary of the Navy's guests, led by the Honorable C. Langhorne WASHBORNE, Asst. Secretary of Commerce
- 17-19 SEP Visit of the Commanding Officer's Father, Mr. Ned REPLOGLE
- 18 SEP Thirty members of the NATO Defense Review Board including: Deputy Secretary General Mr. P. Pansa CEDRONIO; Assistant Secretary General Mr. D. C. HUMPHREYS; the U. S. Delegate, Mr. W. B. PRENDERGAST; The Assistant Director of the NATO International Military Staff, Major General G. TOMMASINI (Italian Air Force); Brigadier General A. FREVERT-NIEDERMEIN of the German Army; and Mr. R. BRABAND, International Staff Director for Force Planning
- 29 OCT Rear Admiral DeWitt L. FREEMAN breaks his flag aboard AMERICA to begin preparation for the Operational Readiness Inspection
- 1 NOV AMERICA goes to the assistance of the crippled sailing schooner HARRY W. ADAMS

- 14-16 NOV Lieutenant General Alfred D. STARBIRD, USA (Ret), Director of Test and Evaluation in the Office of the Director of Defense, Research and Engineering, OSD and Rear Admiral Forrest S. PETERSEN, Assistant Director of Defense Research and Engineering, OSD, visit AMERICA to observe carrier operations and carrier weapon systems in action
- 26 NOV Rear Admiral J. H. DOYLE and his staff embark on board AMERICA, from where they direct operations of the SECOND Fleet during LANTREADEX
- 27 NOV Vice Admiral John G. FINNERAN, COMSECONDFLT, visits AMERICA to coordinate LANTREADEX Operations
- 29 NOV Rear Admiral J. A. VON HOLLEUFFER, COMGERDESFLOT visits AMERICA as the personal guest of Rear Admiral DOYLE
- 6 DEC AMERICA hosts a visit by Vice Admiral Frederick H. MICHAELIS, COMNAVAIRLANT, who was on board to view flight operations, a missile firing exercise and to examine AMERICA's communication quality control monitoring system
- 9 DEC Rear Admiral DOYLE presents the Meritorious Unit Citation to the AMERICA and CVW-8 in recognition of outstanding performance during the 72-73 WESTPAC Deployment
- 11 DEC Rear Admiral J. D. BULKELEY, Rear Admiral W. C. BARNES and the Inspection and Survey Board embark on AMERICA to determine the material condition of the ship
- 15 DEC Vice Admiral Frederick H. MICHAELIS, COMNAVAIRLANT, visits AMERICA to hear the findings of the INSURV Board

## NARRATIVE

New Year's Day, 1973, found AMERICA at anchor in Hong Kong Harbour, in the middle of her sixth major deployment. (AMERICA had made two previous cruises to the Gulf of Tonkin and three to the Mediterranean since she was commissioned in 1965). All hands were enjoying a well deserved and hard earned rest after two extensive line periods on YANKEE STATION and after being deployed from Norfolk for seven months. Having spent Christmas at sea it was nice to be able to greet the New Year with parties ashore.

On January 4th AMERICA got underway for Subic and two more days for rest and repairs there before heading back to the line. We had been following the Peace Talks with great interest and after two weeks on the line we learned that a peace settlement was secured and would be signed in Paris. We waited with great anticipation for the signing and for 0800H on January 28th when the war in Vietnam officially ended.

It was hoped and rumored around the ship that possibly our deployment would be shortened because of the wars end and we returned to Subic Bay on February 3rd with this hope in mind. It wasn't until the seventh of February that we officially received word that we would return almost one month earlier than scheduled. We were to return to Subic Bay on February 17, 1973, and depart to return straight to the United States on February 20th. It was a happy crew that departed for the last short line period.

As we prepared to leave the Western Pacific once more, many departing messages arrived. One was received from Vice Admiral James L. HOLLOWAY, III,

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Commander SEVENTH Fleet, which read in part, "...as you depart the Western Pacific, after a sustained period of combat operations, you can be assured that the AMERICA team has earned the admiration and respect of the entire SEVENTH Fleet for her performance. Well done to all hands."

Admiral B. A. CLAREY, Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet; Admiral Ralph W. COUSINS, and Admiral Elmo R. ZUMWALT also sent congratulatory messages. Admiral ZUMWALT said in part, "...you have performed your assigned tasks with imagination and dispatch. You have been a worthy namesake of the Great Country you proudly represent, and you have helped leave our friends and allies in Indochina with real hope for a lasting and honorable peace. Congratulations upon your accomplishments past and best wishes. Smooth sailing and hurry home".

AMERICA returned to Subic Bay on February 17th and departed for Mayport and Norfolk on February 20th as scheduled. On February 24th, the Equator was crossed for the first time this year and the crew welcomed aboard King Neptune. This time there were many loyal Shellbacks to help insure that a proper initiation was held. By Sunset approximately 900 slimey, scurvy, greasy pollywogs had become loyal Shellbacks.

On March 22nd AMERICA tied up at Mayport, Florida for a few hours to off load men from the Air Wing and to pick up the teenage sons of some of the Ships Company Officers and Men. It was arranged for them to come aboard at Mayport and to ride the ship back to Norfolk with their dads. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part.

On March 24th AMERICA tied up at Pier 12, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, Virginia, ending her sixth major deployment. \*\* She immediately began a thirty day standdown period and made preparations for entering Norfolk Naval Shipyard for a Restricted Availability period.

AMERICA's Commanding Officer, Captain Burton H. SHEPHERD, was relieved by Captain Thomas N. REPLOGLE on April 11, during a colorful ceremony on the hangar deck. Heading the extensive list of dignitaries was Admiral Ralph W. COUSINS, Commander in Chief Atlantic and U. S. Atlantic Fleet, who was also the guest speaker. Captain Shepherd assumed the rank of Rear Admiral immediately after the ceremony.

One of Captain Shepherds last acts was the presentation of the Seventh Annual Catherine T. McDonald Award to Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Mark J. STULL, and Master Chief Fire Control Technician Tommy V. RATHBONE. This award is presented to an officer and enlisted member of AMERICA's crew who, during the preceding year, contributed most to the morale, operating efficiency, and material readiness of the ship.

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\*\* The ship's WESTPAC Cruise Report was included with the 1972 History. It gives a much more complete and broader scope of problems encountered, lessons learned, techniques applied and statistics during the days at YANKEE STATION than could be written in this brief history.

On 11 May AMERICA moved from pier twelve at the Naval Station, Norfolk, to a berth at Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia, for a scheduled three month Restricted Availability (RAV) period. During this RAV the ship completed a minor overhaul of the engineering spaces, ordnance areas, electronic equipment, and hangar, flightdeck and Intergrated Operational Intelligence Center facilities. While in the yard AMERICA received a new Executive Officer when Commander E. Hawley BROOKS relieved Commander Georges E. Le BLANC on June first.

After departing the shipyard on August 10th, AMERICA tied up to pier twelve again for some last repairs before going to sea for trials. The 21st of August found us again at sea for the first of several short periods. We returned in time for the America Ships Picnic at the Fleet Recreation Center where a day of fun and relaxation was enjoyed by crewmembers and their dependents.

On 28 August AMERICA was host to several owners of National Football League Teams. Mr. ROBBIE (Miami Dolphins), Mr. WILLIAMS (Washington Redskins), Mr. BIDWELL (St. Louis Cardinals), Mr. TOSE (Philadelphia Eagles), Mr. MODELL (Cleveland Browns), Mr. HALAS (Chicago Bears), and Mr. WINTER (Minnesota Vikings) came aboard as guests of Rear Admiral Emmett H. TIDD, Commander Naval Recruiting Command. They were guided around the ship and spent time talking to the crew on the messdecks and elsewhere.

A major milestone on August 29th was the 100,000th landing since flight operations commenced aboard AMERICA in 1965. The plane was our own MISS AMERICA piloted by Lieutenant Commander Lewis R. NEWBY

with Lieutenant Commander Ronnie B. BAKER. The occasion was celebrated with cake cuttings on the Hangar Deck and in the Wardroom.

Rear Admiral Lawrence R. GEIS, Deputy COMNAVAIRLANT for Tactical Air, broke his flag aboard AMERICA on September 10th to assist us with our training and our Operational Readiness Exercise (ORE). When our schedule was changed on September 19th the Admiral departed.

From September 14th to our return to Norfolk on September 19th, AMERICA was visited by more dignitaries than at any other time since her commissioning. Room does not permit listing everyone, but among them were: The Secretary of the Navy's guests, led by the Honorable C. LANGHORNE WASHBORNE, Assistant Secretary of Commerce; Mr. Ned REPLOGLE, father of AMERICA's Commanding Officer; and thirty members of the NATO Defense Review Board. Among the dignitaries in this last group were, Deputy Secretary General Mr. P. Pansa CEDRONIO, Assistant Secretary General Mr. D. C. HUMPHREYS, the U. S. Delegate, Mr. W. B. PRENDERGAST, the Assistant Director of the NATO International Military Staff, Major General G. TOMMASINI (Italian Air Force), Brigadier General A. FREVERT-NIEDERMEIN of the German Army, and Mr. R. BRABAND, International Staff Director for Force Planning.

Our schedule was suddenly changed after our return and we found that we were to spend almost a month at pier 12 while needed repairs were made. This period was constructively used and after much hard work by all hands AMERICA departed for her sea trials on October 16th. Everything went well and upon our return on the 17th we had all eight boilers on the line and functioning properly. After a few days of

preparations AMERICA again went to sea on October 23rd to resume training and exercises which would prepare us for our extended deployment to the Mediterranean in January.

The AMERICA returned to port on October 26 for a three day stay in Norfolk before steaming to the Jacksonville Operations Area, with CVW 8 embarked. RADM DeWitt L. FREEMAN, Commander of Carrier Group FOUR embarked to begin evaluation of AMERICA's Operational Readiness in preparation for the forth coming Operational Readiness Exercise.

AMERICA was conducting training operations on Thursday morning, November 1, 1973, when she went to the assistance of the crippled sailing schooner the HARRY W. ADAMS. The ADAMS had lost engine power, pumps, and was taking on water. Helicopter crewmen, rescue specialists and underwater demolition experts from AMERICA sped to the floundering 147 foot sailing vessel.

Captain DEVINNIE of the ADAMS and his nine crewmembers escaped serious injury. Karen Ann-Marie BRESSLER, Larry A. WOODRUFF, and Tammie D. McWILLIAMS, three of the crewmen, were flown to the AMERICA where they received medical examinations and a warm meal. AMERICA stood by until late afternoon when the Coast Guard Cutter PORT ROBERTS arrived to assist the ADAMS into port at Jacksonville.

The following message was received from COMNAVAIRLANT concerning the rescue:

"Successful rescue of crewmembers and services provided to Nova Scotia schooner HENRY W. ADAMS as reported noted with pleasure and satisfaction. Your quick reaction and professional response to a mission of mercy was

carried out in a Navy/Coast Guard team effort. I extend a hearty well done. VADM MICHAELIS

A letter of appreciation was also received from the crew of the ADAMS.

Gentlemen:

Expressing the crew's thanks is very difficult at this moment. The words "thank you" seem so insignificant, yet there appears to be no other words in our language to express our feelings.

The most moving part of the incident wasn't really seeing the aircraft above, but looking over our starboard beam and seeing your tremendous vessel off the horizon.

On behalf of our crew: God bless you all. May the sea always be kind.

"The Captain and Crew  
"Harry W. Adams"

On November 8, AMERICA anchored off Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The crew took four days of well deserved liberty. During this time numerous groups toured the ship. The Navy League, and local educational, government and civic leaders were just a few.

After this brief port period, AMERICA again put to sea to continue preparations for the upcoming Operational Readiness Inspection and Mediterranean Deployment.

The next five days were busy ones for the ship-airwing team aboard AMERICA. A SAMEX was conducted during which the ship's terrier missiles were launched against drones simulating hostile aircraft. The airwing, CVW-8, made short work of a destroyer target hull during a SINKEX. And the fighter pilots won all of their engagements with drones launched as

targets in the MISSILEX. Numerous other drills and evolutions were conducted during this time, all designed to enhance the readiness of AMERICA.

On November 17, AMERICA anchored off Mayport for the purpose of embarking the Operational Readiness Evaluation team. After remaining anchored for only a few hours AMERICA again put to sea, this time with expert personnel evaluating and grading every phase of the ship's operation. As expected, the ship and airwing both received very high grades, bringing them one step closer to the readiness necessary for the Med Deployment.

Two days after leaving Mayport a member of the crew of AMERICA fell overboard, and a HC-2 (Det. 66) helicopter from AMERICA made their fourth rescue of the deployment. The flight crew consisted of LCDR R. W. KNIGHT, LT J. KUNDTS, First Crewman ADJ2 RABITO and Wet Crewman AME3 STEWARD.

November 21, AMERICA was back home again at Pier 12, Norfolk, for the Thanksgiving Holiday. In five days it was time to go to sea again. The main purpose of this at sea period was to participate in LANTREADEX. RADM J. H. DOYLE broke his flag aboard AMERICA, from which he coordinated the operations of Second Fleet Surface, Subsurface and Air Forces.

While the exercise HOT WASH for LANTREADEX was taking place in Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, the men of AMERICA relaxed. The day started with representative aircraft of CVW 8 conducting air operations close aboard so that the crew could see the product of their efforts.

After these aircraft were recovered, swim call went down. A large

portion of the crew enjoyed the warm Caribbean waters and the bright equatorial sun.

As soon as swim call was secured, AMERICA proceeded to steam for Mayport. The crew spent the rest of the day enjoying a barbecue and trap shooting on the flight deck.

On December 11, AMERICA moored in Mayport for a few hours. Off-loaded were some of the squadrons based in the south and on the west coast. Embarked were RADM J. D. BULKELEY, RADM W. C. BARNES, and the Inspection and Survey Board. This board conducted an inspection of the material readiness of the ship for the next five days.

AMERICA moored at Pier 12, Norfolk on December 13. This is where it would stay until deploying to the Mediterranean at the beginning of the new year.

The final inport period was spent loading supplies and making last minute preparations for the upcoming deployment. But perhaps most important, the crew of AMERICA spent the holidays with family and friends.