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USS CHARLES P. CECIL (DD 835)

HISTORY 1972

01 MARCH 1973

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DESRON 24 HISTORY 1972
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A. CHRONOLOGY

JANUARY 1972

- 01 Inport Newport, Rhode Island.
- 03 Underway for local operations. Conducted Full Power Run, Gunnery Shoot and exercised at General Quarters.
- 04 Return to Newport, Rhode Island.
- 07 Underway for Middle East Deployment. Transit to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. Conducted Naval Gunfire Support Drills and exercised at General Quarters.
- 10 Arrive Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
- 12 Underway for Recife, Brazil.
- 19 Arrive Recife, Brazil for brief stop for fuel.
- 20 Underway for Luanda, Angola.
- 27 Arrive Luanda, Angola.
- 29 Underway for Lorenzo Marques, Mozambique.

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FEBRUARY 1972

- 05 Arrive Lourenzo Marques, Mozambique.
- 08 Underway for Mombasa, Kenya.
- 11 Arrive Mombasa, Kenya. INCHOP COMIDEASTFOR and relieve USS KRAUS.
- 15 Underway for Assab, Ethiopia and duties in COMIDEASTFOR. Transit exercised at General Quarters and conducted Gunnery Shoots with United Kingdom Frigate HMS DIOMEDES.
- 21 Arrive Assab, Ethiopia.
- 22 Underway for Massawa, Ethiopia.
- 24 Arrive Massawa, Ethiopia.
- 29 Underway for Yenbo, Saudi Arabia. Steamed north along Sudanese and Egyptian coasts exercising at General Quarters.

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MARCH 1972

- 05 Moor Yenbo, Saudi Arabia. Officers and men received by Emir of Yenbo, NAYIF SUDAIRE.
- 07 Underway for Djibouti, French Territory of Afars and Issas.
- 10 Moor Djibouti, French Territory of Afars and Issas.
- 12 Underway for Al Masirah, Oman. Conducted Communications Exercises with elements of the French Navy stationed at Djibouti.
- 16 Anchored off Al Masirah Island, Oman. Liberty Party sent ashore as guests of the British Royal Air Force.
- 17 Underway for Sitra, Bahrain.
- 20 Moor Sitra, Bahrain for brief fuel stop, receive mail. Anchored out following refueling evolution.
- 21 Underway for Sir Abu Nu'Air.
- 24 Anchored off Sir Abu Nu'Air Island in Persian Gulf. Landing Party sent ashore to gather intelligence.
- 24 Weighed anchor, underway for Dubai, Union of Arab Emirates.
- 25 Moor Dubai.
- 27 Underway for Karachi, West Pakistan. Exercised at General Quarters during transit.
- 29 Moor Karachi, West Pakistan.

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APRIL 1973

- 03 Underway for Manama, Bahrain and scheduled two week upkeep period.
- 05 Intercepted Soviet Task Unit at mouth of Persian Gulf and shadowed for two days gathering intelligence.
- 06 Discontinued shadowing of Soviet Task Unit off Shat Al Arab, Iraq. Set course for Bahrain.
- 07 Moor Manama Pier, Bahrain.
- 08 CECIL notified by message from Joint Chiefs of Staff of Vietnam orders.
- 09 Preparations begun for immediate departure to Southeast Asia. Off-loading of turnover material for USS ROAN.
- 10 Underway for Colombo, Ceylon.
- 13 Rendezvous with USS VALCOUR. USS MYLES C. FOX joins CECIL. Ships exercised at General Quarters. conducted Gunnery Shoots and simulated Naval Gunfire Support.
- 14 INCHOP to SEVENTHFLT. CECIL assigned to Commander Task Unit 70.0.8.
- 18 Moor Colombo, Ceylon for brief stop for fuel.
- 18 (evening) Underway for Singapore. Exercised at General Quarters, conducted NGFS simulation, Helo Inflight Refueling Drills, Rearming and Refueling exercises.
- 21 (evening) Transited the Straits of Malacca, encountered heavy sea traffic proceeding both Northwest and Southeast.
- 22 Anchored at Man O' War Anchorage, Singapore Harbor for brief fuel stop.
- 22 (evening) Underway for Subic Bay, Phillipines. Training of all personnel for combat readiness.
- 25 Moor Subic Bay, Phillipines.

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APRIL 1972 (CONT'D)

- 26 Briefings for Officers on combat conditions and evolutions off Vietnam.
- 27 Commenced TAV with USS PIEDMONT (AD 17)
- 30 Underway for Vietnam. COMDESRON 33 embarked aboard. Naval Gunfire Support Qualification at Tabones Test Range.

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MAY 1972

- 01 CECIL entered Combat Zone and crew commenced Condition III watch status.
- 02 Arrived Gun Line. Assigned Point Allison I Bravo as asset of TU 70.8.9. No firing missions.
- 03 Conducted H or I mission against suspected Communist sites.
- 04 Detached from Task Unit to search for Buffalo Hunter Drone in vicinity of Tiger Island. Drone successfully recovered. CECIL returned to Gun Line and TU 70.8.9 on Point Angela, Station 3A.
- 05 Fired H or I on seven targets (five rounds each).
- 06 Fired H or I from Point Angela, Station 3B.
- 07 Fired H or I from Point Allison, Station 1A.
- 08 Reassigned to TU 77.0.4, North SAR/Picket. Served as Shotgun/Escort for USS OKINAWA in vicinity NSAR Station.
- 09 Enroute Gun Line for NGFS. Reassigned to TU 70.8.9.
- 10 Point Angela, Station 2. Fired call for fire mission on two targets - Negative GDA.
- 11 No fire missions off Point Angela. Transited south along coast to Point Betsy.
- 14 Transited North to Point Allison. Conducted several fire missions with excellent GDA.
- 15 Assigned to TU 77.1.2 "Linebacker" Operation in Gulf of Tonkin. Held four NGFS strikes.
- 16 Linebacker Operations. Held five NGFS strikes.
- 17 Linebacker Operations. Held two NGFS strikes.
- 18 Transit from TU 77.1.2 to South SAR TU 77.0.3.
- 19 South SAR Operations

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MAY 1972 (CONT'D)

- 20 South SAR Operations and transit to TU 70.8.9.
- 21 Fired H or I Mission from Point Angela, Station 3B.
Fired three Call For Fire Missions.
- 22 No Fire Missions.
- 23 Two Call For Fire Missions and One H or I Mission off
Point Angela.
- 24 Fired Area Target and Point Target as deception for
Amphibious Assault Ksong Thanh 6-72. 110 rounds fired.
- 25 Assigned Point Allison, Station 2. Expended 40 rounds
on enemy tanks.
- 26 H or I Missions from Point Allison, Station 2 and
Station 1A (night).
- 28 Enroute Point Claudia.
- 29 Conducted Rearming and Refueling during daylight
hours. NGFS H or I Mission off Point Claudia, Station
8 at night.
- 30 NGFS Call For Fire Mission off Point Claudia.
- 31 NGFS H or I Missions from Station 3A+, Point Claudia.

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JUNE 1972

- 01 NGFS H or I Mission from Station 3A+ Point Claudia.
- 03 Detached from NGFS Operations with TU 70.8.9.
Enroute Subic Bay, Phillipines for Upkeep.
- 05 Moor Subic Bay, Phillipines. Commenced one week TAV
with USS PIEDMONT (AD 17).
- 12 Underway for Vietnam.
- 14 Arrive Gun Line. H or I Missions from Point Dolly.
- 15 Firing Missions on Point Targets Quang Ngai Province.
Various firing missions in and around the Quang Ngai
Province Region through the remainder of the month.

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JULY 1972

- 01 Detached from TU 70.8.9. Unloading of ammunition alongside MT. KATMAI. CECIL recovers man overboard from MT. KATMAI. Rendezvous with USS MYLES C. FOX and proceed enroute Hong Kong.
- 03 Arrive Hong Kong. Moored to Buoy in Hong Kong Harbor alongside FOX.
- 08 Underway for Yokosuka, Japan.
- 09 Transit of Taiwan Straits.
- 12 Arrive Yokosuka, Japan.
- 13 Departed Yokosuka, Japan early due to approach of typhoon Phyllis. Enroute Midway Island. Encountered heavy seas and high winds as a result of the distant typhoon.
- 17 OUTCHOP from COMSEVENTHFLT. Transited International Dateline.
- 18 Arrived Arrived Midway. Moored alongside refueling pier. Underway for Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Assigned to TU 10.9.3.
- 21 Moored ammunition pier, West Loch, Pearl Harbor. Underway for East Loch, Pearl Harbor.
- 23 LCDR EMMERICH reported as Prospective Executive Officer. Underway for San Diego, California.
- 28 Moored Naval Base, San Diego. LCDR EMMERICH relieved LCDR CASTRUCCI as Executive Officer.

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AUGUST 1972

- 01 Underway for Panama Canal Zone.
- 08 Entered Gulf of Panama. Anchored eight miles out of Canal entrance to await Pilot. Moored Rodman Naval Base, C.Z. and refueled.
- 09 Transit Panama Canal. Enroute Newport, Rhode Island.
- 14 Arrived Newport, Rhode Island. Moored Pier II. Commenced thirty day standdown period.

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SEPTEMBER 1972

14 Commenced three week Tender Availability with USS
SHENANDOAH (AD 26)

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OCTOBER 1972

- 10 Underway for local operations in the Virginia Capes Operations Area.
- 13 Moored Newport, Rhode Island.
- 24 Underway for local operations in the Virginia Capes Operations Area.
- 27 Returned Narragansett Bay. Ran Gould Island Degaussing Range. Moored Newport, Rhode Island.

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NOVEMBER 1972

- 10 Underway for Anti-Submarine Warfare Exercises and Plane Guard duties with USS INTREPID (CVS 11) in the Virginia Capes Operations Area.
- 16 Moored Newport, Rhode Island.
- 20 Commenced month-long Tender Availability with USS PUGET SOUND (AD 38).

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DECEMBER 1972

- 08 Assigned duty as Second Fleet Ready Duty Ship through 19 December 1972.
- 11 Nuclear Weapons Training Center, Atlantic administered two-day Naval Technical Proficiency Inspection.
- 17 Commenced Holiday Leave Periods.

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NARRATIVE HISTORY

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B. NARRATIVE HISTORY

COMMAND ORGANIZATION

Commanding Officer: Commander Philip C. DONOVAN, USN
27 August 1971 to 22 February 1973

Homeport: Newport, Rhode Island

Homeyard: Boston Naval Shipyard, Charlestown, Mass.

Complement as of 31 December 1971: 17 Officers
263 Enlisted

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HISTORY OF USS CHARLES P. CECIL (DD 835)

The destroyer CECIL is named for Rear Admiral Charles P. CECIL, USN, who was born in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1893 and was a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, class of 1916.

Rear Admiral CECIL was twice cited for extraordinary heroism during the Pacific campaigns of World War II, once as Commander of Destroyer Squadron FIVE during the engagement of Japanese Naval Forces off Santa Cruz Islands, and again as Commanding Officer of USS HELENA during the Kula Gulf action. Rear Admiral CECIL was awarded the Navy Cross with gold star in lieu of second award, and the Bronze Star Medal.

Rear Admiral CECIL survived the sinking of the HELENA during the Kula Gulf action and was subsequently killed in an airplane crash in the Pacific on 31 July 1944.

The USS CHARLES P. CECIL was built in Bath, Maine in 1945 and spent her first four years of service with the Pacific Fleet. In 1949, CECIL was converted to a radar picket destroyer and transferred to the Atlantic Fleet with Newport, Rhode Island as her home port. After her first deployment with the Sixth Fleet in 1949, CECIL made Norfolk, Virginia, her home port. In July 1963, she entered the New York Naval Shipyard for an eleven month FRAM I conversion to ASW destroyer. In May, 1964, her home-port changed to Newport, Rhode Island.

To date, CECIL has participated in thirteen Mediterranean cruises, two Middle East cruises, and two Vietnam cruises in addition to duties with the Western Atlantic SECOND Fleet and various NATO operations. She was one of the first ships on the Cuban Quarantine Line in the fall of 1962, during which she was the principal unit that exhausted a Russian submarine and forced her to surface. CECIL also received the Engineering Efficiency Award for outstanding engineering practice during fiscal year 1965, 1966 and 1967 and was selected as runner-up for Squadron Battle Efficiency "E" in that year. In recent years, CECIL has undergone a regular overhaul in July 1970 at Boston Naval Shipyard, traveled south during the winter of 1971 to undergo intensive Refresher Training at U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and steamed "Down East" in July 1971 to celebrate the Wind-jammer Festival at the Maine community of Boothbay Harbor.

Following extensive operations in late 1971, CECIL departed Newport on 7 January 1972 for the Middle East and an "Around the World" deployment. Acting in various roles as goodwill ambassador, CECIL's time in the Indian Ocean was marked by participation in Project Handclasp, a program through which Navy vessels carry community welfare materials to foreign ports. In April the tempo of operations quickened as CECIL was detached to augment SEVENTH Fleet forces working in support of operations in the Republic of Vietnam. CECIL's assignments included duties as Naval Gunfire Support Ship just south of the Demilitarized Zone, operations with a helicopter

carrier steaming in the Tonkin Gulf, Search and Rescue station ship in the Tonkin Gulf and a unit conducting strikes against selected military targets in North Vietnam. While serving in this capacity the ship's company earned the Combat Action Ribbon for operations while being taken under fire. Departing Vietnam waters 1 July, CECIL continued her circumnavigation with well earned liberty in the Orient and other Pacific ports, returning to Newport on 14 August 1972.

Since September of 1972, CECIL has participated in local operations off the Rhode Island and Virginia coasts and successfully completed the Naval Technical Proficiency Inspection. In January CECIL was notified that she would be transferred to the Naval Reserve Force replacing the USS GEARING (DD 710) in New London, Connecticut on 1 July 1973.

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MIDDLE EAST DEPLOYMENT PERIOD - 01 JAN TO 14 APR 1972

Having successfully met the challenge of preparing for the Middle East deployment during the previous two and one-half months, CECIL entered the new year, with much thanks to the able crewmen of the USS PUGET SOUND (AD 38) and shore-based maintenance teams, in near perfect Engineering repair and Material readiness. On the third of January, CECIL crewmembers returned from the holiday leave periods to get the ship underway for Engineering trials, simulated Gunnery Shoots and General Quarters Drills. All proved satisfactory and the ship was ready in every respect to depart on the first leg of her long journey to the Middle East.

The morning of the seventh of January dawned early for the officers and the men of the CECIL as they readied the ship to stand out to a wintry North Atlantic. Sea Detail complete and in company with the USS MYLES C. FOX (DD 829), CECIL set a southerly course for Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico then conducted the first in a long series of canned exercises that were to be the mainstay of readiness training in a cruise with very limited fleet operations. In anticipation of Naval Gunfire Support Qualification at Culebra, CECIL spent many hours exercising

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at General Quarters while simulating NGFS operations.

A brief visit made to the Naval Base at Roosevelt Roads for fuel was extended two days when the FOX encountered engineering problems. This delayed departure from Roosevelt Roads until the afternoon of the twelfth, precluding NGFS trials at Culebra and setting us somewhat behind schedule.

The second leg of the voyage was over 2,500 nautical miles in length and proved to be rough sailing as the ship encountered high winds and heavy seas following passage through the Windward Islands. When the ship arrived at Recife, Brazil on the afternoon of 19 January the fuel percentage was a low 18 percent. Following a lengthy refueling evolution which lasted into the early morning hours, CECIL departed Recife at dawn on the twentieth for the transatlantic voyage to Luanda, Angola. The memory of the second leg transit, however, would not be easily forgotten. For many, the experience of crossing the equator and its concomitant frivolities would be more indelible than any bad weather that might have occurred along the way. Ceremonies were duly conducted two days out of Recife to extract the majority of the crew from the disgrace of pollywoggery.

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In contrast with the second leg, the third leg transatlantic voyage to Africa was a rather placid affair; the weather hot, the seas calm, a phenomena not to be unexpected for the next six months. Halfway across the South Atlantic, CECIL passed within 40 nautical miles of tiny Ascension Island, a former British coaling station now serving as a communications facility for the Royal Navy's Southern Command. One day out of Luanda, CECIL encountered the Benguelas Current, a cold stream running north along the Western coast of Africa which affords a favorable environment for a multitude of sea life. Crew members observed seals, dolphins, whales, and a school of porpoise numbering in the thousands. The school was being curiously shadowed by a pack of rather distressingly large sharks and those taking pictures of the event found themselves reassuring their secure positions on the main deck.

The following day all hands prepared for entering Luanda, a natural harbor dredged for large merchant traffic on the desolate northwest coast of Angola. When abeam of the harbor entrance, CECIL responded to the 21 gun salute of the Portuguese Royal Navy with 21 salvos fired from saluting batteries positioned on the port and starboard sides of the torpedo deck. After mooring at one on Luanda's

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many commercial piers, the crew was granted liberty with many of the sailors finding their way to the city's fine white sandy beaches no more than 15 minutes away. CECIL's basketball team also received their first challenge of the cruise from a Portuguese Club Team led by an American Peace Corps volunteer.

All hands apparently enjoyed Luanda as there were many reluctant faces on board the morning of departure. However, most looked forward to what was in store at the next port call, Lourenzo Marques, Mozambique.

The last days in January were spent transiting along the "Skeleton" coast of Africa, named such because it is one of the driest, most desolate regions of the world. On February 2nd CECIL rounded the Cape of Good Hope at 35° South Latitude, the most southerly point she would reach during circumnavigation, then headed Northeast along the green littoral of the Republic of South Africa for Lourenzo Marques.

The Sea Detail at Delagoa Bay was marked by its length (4 hours) and the presence of shifting sand bars and tricky currents. When CECIL reached the entrance to Lourenzo Marques harbor she found a beautiful city set atop a green plateau that was not unlike many in the United States.

A busy social schedule met CECIL at the Commercial and

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Naval Piers. The Commanding Officer paid an official call to the ranking Portuguese Naval Officer in town and CECIL's stellar basketballers were challenged by the University of Lourenzo Marques.

At 0800 on February 8 CECIL made the long journey out of Delagoa Bay and set course for Mombasa, Kenya. It would be at Mombasa where CECIL would enter the jurisdiction of COMIDEASTFOR and relieve USS KRAUS (DD 849) as a member of the Middle East Force.

Upon arrival Mombasa, turnover was executed immediately followed by the required official calls to dignitaries in the Kenyan Government. Recreation for the crew took the form of overnight safaris into the Tsavo National Game Park and numerous sporting events. CECIL was challenged to a game of soccer by the crewmembers of the British frigate DIONEDES and oiler HMS TIDESPRING. Shopping also proved a popular form of recreation. Street merchants successfully peddled their wood and jewelery ware on many CECIL men.

After five enjoyable days in Mombasa, CECIL and FOX went separate ways. FOX headed for Diego Suarez on the northern tip of the island of Madagascar and CECIL set course for Assab, Ethiopia. During the transit, CECIL exercised at General Quarters and conducted "Div Tais" and

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Gunnery Shoots with HMS DIOMEDES. CECIL and DIOMEDES also exchanged personnel for several hours via the British frigate's helicopter.

In the late evening of February 20, CECIL passed through the Straits of Bali el Mandeb and entered the Red Sea. The following morning the ship moored at the refueling pier at Assab, Ethiopia. The Wardroom entertained business and political leaders in Assab in the first of many shipboard receptions. The CECIL soccer team played their second match of the cruise against a local team composed of government oil workers. An important contribution was made in the form of Project Handclasp material as volunteer crewmembers delivered books, sporting equipment and clothing to needy families in the immediate area.

On February 22 the ship left Assab bound for Massawa, Ethiopia's major seaport several hundred miles up the Red Sea. Junior Officer Shiphandling was conducted during the transit. At Massawa, CECIL men were pleased to find a large community of American Army personnel and dependents along with a modern recreation center which provided all the comforts of home. A contingent of CECIL Radiomen took an overnight trip to Asmara to tour the U.S. Naval Communications Station there. The wardroom attended a reception hosted by the Commanding Officer of the Massawa Naval Base at the

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Imperial Ethiopian Navy Officers Club then reciprocated, in turn, by hosting a luncheon for the Ethiopian Officers on board. Handclasp material was also distributed.

February 29 marked the end of the pleasant five-day inport period and the beginning of our next Middle East leg. Yenbo, Saudi Arabia, a lonely outpost on the northern shores of the Red Sea was the destination. Perhaps Yenbo's only claim to fame was that Lawrence of Arabia once used the city as a stronghold for his Arab guerilla forces. In any event, CECIL arrived with an optimistic outlook and opened the ship to general visiting, hosting more than 600 people in two days. CECIL's now veteran basketball team accepted an invitation to play the Emir's basketball team in a game played before more than 500 of the townspeople. The CECIL wardroom enjoyed a traditional Arab banquet at the residence of the Emir of Yenbo.

Following the successful two day stay at Yenbo, CECIL was underway again, this time for Djibouti, French Territory of Afars and Issas. The ship made numerous stops along the Red Sea route so that crewmembers could throw over their lines and take advantage of the area's excellent fishing.

CECIL was met on arrival Djibouti by French Army and Naval personnel who graciously offered their services in

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the form of transportation and recreation facilities for the men. The jovial French also made sure enough time was set aside to splice the main brace ashore.

On 12 March CECIL was underway bound for Sitra, Bahrain with a brief stop along the way planned for Al Masirah Island off the coast of Oman.

The call at Sitra, Bahrain was to be a short one with refueling at the open-roadsted the only event scheduled. CECIL's motor whale boat made frequent trips ashore for mail and supplies which were welcome sights to all hands. After anchoring out in Bahrain harbor the weather, which had been good for the past two months, took a turn for the worse. There was a sudden gusting of wind and upsurge in seas and the motor whale boat, which had been on a mail run at the time, was forced to remain ashore for the night.

On the twenty-first the motor whale boat returned safely and CECIL weighed anchor and set course for the island of Sir Abu Nu Air in the Southeastern corner of the Persian Gulf. Anchoring approximately five miles south of the island, the ship sent a landing party ashore to collect intelligence on the desolate, uninhabited isle. The same evening, CECIL proceeded eastward in the Gulf and moored the next morning in the newly constructed harbor at

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Dubai, Union of Arab Emirates. The American community in Dubai hosted a beach cookout for all hands and the ship's soccer team was again active in a match against the city's excellent soccer team.

The twenty-seventh of March dawned early as CECIL cast off all lines and headed into the Arabian Sea bound for the port of Karachi, Pakistan. The two day transit was busy with General Quarters and Emergency Casualty drills. The ship set Sea Detail on the morning of 29 March and steamed five miles up the channel to Karachi piers amongst heavy merchant traffic in both directions. CECIL was the first U.S. warship to enter the port since the January 1972 Indo-Pakistan war.

Captain DRAZ, Naval Attache for the United States Consulate and Defense Advisory Office, Karachi was paid an official call by the Commanding Officer upon arrival. Later that evening, Captain DRAZ hosted a reception for CECIL officers at his residence in downtown Karachi. The American School at Karachi opened its facilities for CECIL crew members. The gymnasium, swimming pool and snack bar were popular spots for the men during the five day inpprt period. The ship's basketball and volleyball teams were tested by both Consulate staff and Pakistani Naval Academy squads. Shopping for Persian rugs, wood and brass wares was a

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favorite pastime. Indeed, for many, Karachi had been the most enjoyable port on the cruise.

On April 3, CECIL was underway for Bahrain and a scheduled two week upkeep period pier side. During the transit, CECIL received word that a Soviet Task Unit was proceeding toward the Persian Gulf. CECIL was ordered to intercept and shadow. Within hours, CECIL has established the position of the Task Unit and successfully carried out her orders, at times approaching as close as 1000 yards. At Shat Al Arab Light off Iraq, the Soviet Task Unit anchored and CECIL was detached to proceed toward Manama, Bahrain and a well-deserved inport period.

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DESRON 24 HISTORY 1972
USS CHARLES P. CECIL (DD 835)
01 MARCH 1973

VIETNAM TRANSIT, PREPARATION & COMBAT OPERATIONS

14 APRIL - 3 JULY 1972

On 8 April, just one day following her arrival, CECIL was notified by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington that she would be detached from the Middle East Force to augment SEVENTH Fleet fighting forces working in support of operations in the Republic of Vietnam. Immediate preparations were begun with the crew working day and night unloading supplies and readying turnover materials for the ship's Middle East Force relief, USS ROAN (DD 853).

CECIL departed Bahrain for Colombo, Ceylon on 10 April transiting the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea and Laccadive Passage in company with the USS MYLES C. FOX (DD 829) arriving in Colombo on the eighteenth. CECIL remained in Colombo long enough to refuel and departed in the midst of a violent thunderstorm bound for Singapore at the southern end of the Straits of Molacca. All the while, the officers and the men of the CECIL exercised intensively at General Quarters, Naval Gunfire Support and conducted helicopter inflight and underway replenishment drills in preparation for Vietnam. The ship transited the Straits of Molacca the evening of 21 April arriving in Singapore harbor the next morning for a brief fuel stop.

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Topped off, CECIL set course for Subic Bay in the Phillipines where she would undergo one week of Tender Availability before departing for Vietnam.

Subic Bay was bustling with ships when CECIL arrived there on 25 April. The ship soon found herself a part of the hectic activity with repair work, installation of equipment and intelligence briefings being just a few of the items on a seemingly never-ending list which had to be complete before CECIL could be considered battle ready.

On 30 April, CECIL left Subic Bay and traveled some 25 miles north along the Phillipine coast to the Tabones Gunnery Range for NGFS Qualification. With a mark of satisfactory, CECIL began her transit to the Gun Line with Commander Destroyer Squadron 33 embarked. On 1 May, CECIL entered the combat zone and the second she arrived on station as an asset of Task Unit 70.8.9. The following day was the first assigned NGFS mission which consisted of firing Harassment or Interdiction against suspected communist sites. On 4 May CECIL was detached from the Task Unit to search for a Buffalo Hunter Drone in the vicinity of Tiger Island, a communist held isle with coastal defense guns overlooking the sea at a height of more than 400 feet. CECIL steamed at full speed to the estimated position of

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of the downed drone and commenced a search pattern keeping a close watch on the island for any counterbattery fire. Fortunately, the ship spotted the drone, retrieved it within minutes and retired from the area at flank speed encountering no hostile fire from the island. Needless to say, all hands were quite relieved.

After transferring the drone to a helicopter in DaNang harbor, CECIL returned to her Gun Line station at Point Angela and spent the next three days conducting NGFS missions in and around Quang Tri city. Navigation was particularly difficult due to the lack of visual aids, prominent topography and the low-lying character of the beach.

CECIL was bound for the Gulf of Tonkin on 8 May, assigned duties as shotgun/escort for the USS OKINAWA (LPH 3) in the vicinity of North Search and Rescue Station. 9 May saw the conclusion of escort duties and a return to the Gun Line. From 10 to 14 May, CECIL was engaged in numerous firing missions off Points Angela, Allison and Betsy. The missions were usually conducted with the help of spotter aircraft who observed the fall of shot and relayed any corrections that were necessary for target destruction. Gun Damage Assessment was generally positive.

On the fifteenth of May, CECIL returned to the Gulf of

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Tonkin for what was certainly the most harrowing episode of the cruise. Linebacker Strike Operations against selected targets in North Vietnam. During the four days of raids, which were staged at night at high speeds, CECIL received heavy counterbattery fire from coastal defense sites lining the North Vietnamese coast. For this, the ship's company earned the Combat Action Ribbon. Following Linebacker operations, the ship again assumed responsibilities as a SAR Picket Destroyer enroute to TU 70.8.9 and continued NGFS duties.

On the third of June, CECIL was detached from TU 70.8.9 to return to Subic Bay for a week's upkeep and some well-deserved liberty. Arriving in Subic on the fifth, CECIL moored alongside the USS PIEDMONT (AD 17) and commenced the hectic schedule of repair.

CECIL departed Subic on 12 June with repairs complete and set course for Point Dolly at the southern end of Military Region I. NGFS was the rule for the next three weeks as CECIL coordinated with ground and air spotters on more than half of the 57 fire missions in Quang Ngai Province to rack up impressive totals in Gun Damage Assessment. Several CECIL crewmembers were awarded the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry for the outstanding performances they rendered during the period.

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In the early morning hours of the first of July, CECIL completed her final Naval Gunfire Support Mission off the coast of South Vietnam. Later that day, CECIL arrived in DaNang harbor to offload to the USS PIEDMONT (AD 17), equipment which had been taken on for the ship's duties in Vietnam. Departing DaNang, CECIL proceeded Northeast to a rendezvous with the USS KATMAI (AE 16) to offload excess ammunition accrued during combat. During the evolution, MT. KATMAI had a man overboard. To the credit of all hands, CECIL recovered the man in less than seven minutes, preventing what might have been a needless loss of life. De-arming complete, CECIL, along with FOX, set course for Hong Kong, some 300 miles to the Northeast.

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RETURN TRANSIT TO CONUS

3 JULY - 14 AUGUST 1972

On the third of July the ship dropped anchor in Hong Kong's broad harbor. Liberty commenced soon thereafter with sightseeing and shopping the most popular diversions. The ship even took on a new look thanks to the skilled hands of Mary Sue and her innumerable helpers who painted out the sides and stacks within a matter of days.

On the morning of July eighth, the CECIL was underway for Yokosuka. Passing through the Straits of Taiwan and the Ryukyu Island chain, CECIL entered busy Toyko Wan and following a long sea and anchor detail, moored at the U.S. Naval Base, Yokosuka, Japan. The ship's stay in Japan was cut short, however, when FOX and CECIL were forced to sortie due to the approach of Typhoon Phyllis on 13 July.

The first portion of the transit to Midway Island was made through heavy seas because of the distant typhoon. On the seventeenth of July, CECIL crossed the International Date Line. After the 2,800 mile transit, CECIL moored at the fuel piers at Midway for a brief fuel stop then was underway again in a few hours for Pearl Harbor.

July 21st the CECIL pulled into Pearl Harbor. The first order of business was a stop in the West Loch at the ammunition pier to onload ASROC.

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After this evolution, the ship shifted berths and moored to the fuel pier at the East Loch. United States Customs Officials boarded CECIL at this point and accounted for all foreign purchases on board. The following day, Lieutenant Commander William S. EMMERICH reported on board as Prospective Executive Officer.

After two days of replenishing and well-earned liberty, CECIL left Pearl Harbor for San Diego, California. On the 28th of July, CECIL arrived in San Diego. Lieutenant Commander EMMERICH relieved Lieutenant Commander Richard F. CASTRUCCI and assumed the duties of Executive Officer. Special discount trips to Disneyland were arranged for CECIL's Vietnam returnees. The California weather was at its best during the ship's stay and the majority of CECIL's East Coast sailors were able to take advantage of Southern California's famous beaches.

On August first, CECIL departed San Diego and proceeded to the Panama Canal. During the transit the ship experienced the cold Tehuantepec Winds off the Mexican coast. The ship arrived at Rodman Naval Station at the western end of the Canal on 8 August for fuel and a brief overnight stop. The next morning, with a civil service pilot aboard, CECIL transited the canal and that evening, sailed out of

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Cristobal Harbor on the last leg of her 'round the world journey. On 14 August, CECIL moored to pier two, Newport amid the joyous cheering of dependents and friends who were there to welcome home the men from more than seven months and 50,000 miles of travel.

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STANDDOWN AND LOCAL OPERATIONS 14 AUGUST - 31 DECEMBER 197

From 14 August through 14 September CECIL was in a stand-down status. Members of the crew who made the cruise were allowed two weeks leave and no operational commitment or inspection could be assigned during the period. On the fourteenth the ship commenced a Tender Availability period with the USS SHENANDOAH (AD 26). The necessary repair work following an extended deployment would be CECIL's major concern during the subsequent three weeks.

The TAV ended on 4 October and the following week CECIL was underway for exercises in the Virginia Capes Operating Area. During this period divisional training and General Quarters drills were conducted. The ship returned to Newport on 13 October.

On 24 October, CECIL returned to the Virginia Capes Operating Area to take part in Anti-Submarine Warfare exercises with the USS MYLES C. FOX (DD 829) and USS SKIPJACK (SSN 585). On the 27th CECIL returned to Newport and ran the Gould Island degaussing range.

On the tenth of November, CECIL was again underway for the Virginia Capes and ASW Exercises with the USS INTREPID (CVS 11). CECIL was positioned in plane guard station for the innumerable flight operations off INTREPID. The ship

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returned to Newport on the sixteenth and commenced a TAV with the USS PUGET SOUND (AD 38). During this time intensive preparations for the upcoming Navy Technical Proficiency Inspection reached their peak. These preparations culminated in CECIL's successful completion of the Nuclear Weapons Training Group, Atlantic inspection on the 11th and 12th of December. On the 21st of December, the ship completed it's TAV period and started the Christmas holiday leave period which would last through the New Year.

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