

USS DULUTH (LPD-6)
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

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IN REPLY REFER TO
LPD6/04/pd
5750
Ser: 010
1 MAR 1971

~~_____~~ - Unclassified upon removal of enclosure (1)
From: Commanding Officer, USS DULUTH (LPD 6)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09B9), Washington
Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. 20390

Subj: Command History

Ref: (a) OPNAV Instruction 5750.12A

1970

Encl: (1) USS DULUTH (LPD 6) Command History (1970)

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded in accordance with refer-
ence (a).

J. E. Mitchell
J. E. MITCHELL

Copy to:
CINCPACFLT
COMPHIBRON FIVE

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Reg 4457

GROUP-4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals;
declassified after 12 years

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CHRONOLOGY OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS

1-12 January Leave and upkeep in San Diego, California

12-22 January Amphibious Refresher Training - Corona Roads and Delmar Boat Basin.

22 January - 7 February Rendezvous and escort Patrol Gunboats, USS GREEN BAY, USS SURPRISE, USS BEACON from 10°15' N. Latitude, 88° W. Longitude to San Diego California via Acapulco, Mexico.

2-11 March ROPEVAL 1-70

24 April Dependents Cruise.

1 May Underway for WestPac Cruise.

6-9 May Inport Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

19-27 May Inport Yokosuka, Japan.

29 May - 2 June Inport Buckner Bay, Okinawa to load Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 1/9 and Amphibious Ready Group ALPHA turnover.

4-6 June Inport Subic Bay to offload BLT 1/9 and load Midshipmen and boats for Wet Well Lifts to Vietnam and Yankee Station.

6-16 June Wet Well lifts between Subic Bay and Vietnam.

16-30 June Subic Bay and local operating area for ARG training. Conducted UNREP in Combat Zone.

3-15 July Inport Sasebo, Japan.

16 July Inport Buckner Bay, Okinawa to load Wet Well lifts for Subic Bay.

19-22 July ARG training in Subic Bay and local operating areas.

23-26 July Amphibious training enroute to and from Combat Zone for UNREP of opportunity.

31 July - 6 August Buckner Bay, Okinawa area for Special Landing Force (SLF) turnover. Offloaded BLT 1/9 and loaded BLT 2/9.

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6-13 August	Enroute to MOD LOC in Combat Zone for UNREP/VERTREP and transit to Subic Bay.
13 August - 7 September	Subic Bay area for ARG training and upkeep.
10-12 September	Rest and Recreation (R & R) in Hong Kong, B.C.C.
12-14 September	Typhoon Georgia evasion.
14-19 September	R & R in Hong Kong.
21-24 September	Amphibious training at Subic Bay. Offloaded BLT 2/9.
24 September - 6 October	Wet Well lifts between Subic Bay and Vietnam. Change-of-Command on 4 October.
16-19 October	R & R in Manila, P.I.
21-25 October	Typhoon Joan Disaster Relief.
29 October - 3 November	R & R in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
7-18 November	Inport Subic Bay for upkeep, Administration Inspection, and to load retro-grade material for CONUS.
21-23 November	Buckner Bay for ARG turnover and to load retro-grade material for CONUS.
25-29 November	Inport Yokosuka, Japan for upkeep, R & R and to load retro-grade material for CONUS.
29 November - 10 December	Enroute to CONUS.
10-31 December	Leave and Upkeep in San Diego, California.

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BASIC NARRATIVE

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1. Command Organization and Relations

a. Captain Robert E. MOORE, USN, assumed command of the USS DULUTH (LPD 6) on 9 June 1969. He was relieved by Captain John E. MITCHELL, USN, on 4 October 1970.¹

b. DULUTH was assigned to Amphibious Squadron FIVE throughout the calendar year 1970. The homeport of DULUTH remains San Diego, California.

c. The mission of the USS DULUTH is to transport and land troops and their essential equipment and supplies by means of embarked landing craft or amphibious vehicles augmented by helicopter lift.

2. Operations and Activities

January

DULUTH began the new year moored port side to USS FRESNO (LST 1166) at berth 66 pier 6, U.S. Naval Station, San Diego, California. Every crew member enjoyed the holiday season and it was now time to prepare the ship and crew for the upcoming Amphibious Refresher Training. Everyone was busy taking care of last minute details, and when 12 January arrived, DULUTH was ready.

The first week of Amphibious Refresher Training (12-16 January) was conducted at Coronado Roads with 150 Marine Troops and 8 amphibious personnel carriers (LVTP-5's) embarked. During the week amphibious landings were made on Red Beach, requiring many LVT launches and recoveries. Observers stated, at the completion of the exercises, that DULUTH had executed the best LVT launches they had ever witnessed.

On 16 January, after the first week of Amphibious Refresher Training, DULUTH moored to Pier Lima, NAS, North Island to load JP-5 and to prepare for the second week of Refresher Training.

On 19 January, DULUTH was underway for Delmar Boat Basin for her second and final week of Amphibious Refresher Training. This week of training included a look at flight operations from DULUTH. Marine troops were lifted by helicopter and, in addition, aircraft from Naval Air Reserve Squadron ONE conducted landing practice. A total of 130 landings was logged during the week and a cake cutting ceremony was held in honor of the 5,000th helicopter landing on DULUTH's flight deck.

1. Annex A - DULUTH Change of Command Ceremony pamphlet of 4 October 1970

Annex E - Photo #5.

Annex D - Family Gram dated November 1970

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This week of training was terminated one day early so that DULUTH could proceed to 10°15' North, 88° West with a mission to rendezvous and escort three Patrol Gunboats to San Diego via Acapulco, Mexico. On 22 January the refresher training was completed and when the final tally was compiled, DULUTH received an overall grade of Good for the exercises conducted.²

After these two weeks of refresher training DULUTH was looking forward with great anticipation to the patrol gunboat escort mission and liberty on the sunny beaches of Acapulco, Mexico. Rendezvous was made at 1600S, 28 January with the USS SUPRISE (PG 97), USS BEAC (PG 99) and USS GREEN BAY (PG 101) and a northwesterly course was set for Acapulco. On 29 January DULUTH UNREPED the three Gunboats, making another first for DULUTH. On the morning of 31 January DULUTH dropped her anchor in 16 fathoms of water in Acapulco harbor and liberty began for most of the crew.

February

Liberty in Acapulco, Mexico was enjoyed by all hands. Some of the highlights of the visit were the beautiful beaches and a Deep-Sea Fishing Trip on 1 February. On 2 February DULUTH was underway again enroute to San Diego. On the third and again on the sixth of February DULUTH UNREPED the three Gunboats, giving them a total of 34,000 gallons of JP-5 fuel during the two UNREP's.

The arrival back in San Diego on 7 February was welcomed by the crew. DULUTH moored to pier 4, U.S. Naval Station, San Diego and remained there for the remainder of the month. On 18 February DULUTH was host ship for a number of guests of the Secretary of the Navy and VADM J. V. Smith, USN, Commander Amphibious Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet. The remaining ten days of the month found DULUTH making preparations for a new role as an ASW Carrier in ROPEVAL 1-70.

March

Because of the unavailability of a CVS or LPH as an ASW Carrier in ROPEVAL 1-70, DULUTH was assigned this mission. Prior to getting underway on 2 March, RADM M.C. Gillette, USN, Commander Anti-submarine Group THREE, and part of his staff, moved on board for ROPEVAL 1-70.

2. Annex F - Commander Amphibious Training Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet ltr Ser: 025 of 30 JAN 1970.

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Others on board for the exercise included COMCARANTISUBAIRGRU FIFTY-THREE and HELANTISUBRON TWO with five SH-3A helicopters.

After getting underway on 2 March, DULUTH proceeded to the San Diego local operating areas. Work was begun immediately with HS-2 conducting day and night carrier qualifications for their pilots and providing the necessary additional training and experience for DULUTH's Air Department in handling the SH-3A. The 120 landings on the first day of ROPEVAL 1-70 gave most of the squadron pilots their first landing aboard an LPD and provided many of DULUTH's Air Department personnel with new experiences in landing, launching, refueling, and positioning 5 aircraft on DULUTH's 207 foot flight deck.

The training and experience on the first day of ROPEVAL 1-70 was of great value and, in the following week, DULUTH was to prove her worth as an ASW Carrier by launching and recovering two aircraft on the average of every two and one-half hours, around-the-clock, for six days. The flight schedule required the launching of a flight of aircraft for five hours with a hot-refuel aboard DULUTH after two and one-half hours of flight time. The next launch of two aircraft was one hour after the recovery of the previous launch. With helicopter logistic support from NAS Imperial Beach by HS-8 on 6,7, and 8 March HS-2 was able to maintain an amazing 96 percent availability with no aborts.³

In addition to the mission of ASW Command Ship/Helicopter Carrier DULUTH played another role of some importance in ROPEVAL 1-70, the role of Deception. This role required DULUTH to take on the appearance and sounds of a CVA in order to deceive the exercise enemy submarine and to allow the BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA 31) to proceed undetected and deliver air strikes against the enemy's home land. To accomplish this task, DULUTH rigged red lights from her lighted flight deck to the bow to give the appearance of a carrier flight deck. Sideports were opened and rigged with lights to give the appearance of aircraft hanger bays. A destroyer joined DULUTH in close formation to help give deceptive screw beats. Deceptive communications were used to add additional realism. With these things done, the stage was set, the roll was played, and the results were 14 simulated enemy torpedoes in DULUTH's side while the BON HOMME RICHARD went undetected to deliver devastating strikes against the enemy mother land.

The week of ROPEVAL 1-70 was also a week for VIP's. In addition to RADM M.C. Gillette, USN, COMASWGRU THREE who was aboard for the entire exercise, VADM I.C. Kidd, USN, COMFIRSTFLT was on board for a short visit on 3 March. On the fifth and sixth of March, Secretary of Navy John Chaffee was on board for an official visit and to meet with some of the officers and men.⁴

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3. Annex D - Family Gram dated 27 March 1970.
 - Annex E - Photo #1
 4. Annex D - Family Gram dated 27 March 1970.
 - Annex E - Photo #3.

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DULUTH did herself proud in ROPEVAL 1-70 and congratulatory messages were received from every quarter.⁵ The crew of DULUTH had worked hard and exceptionally long hours to protect DULUTH's "Can Do" spirit. Many men did without sleep for days and could be found napping, when time allowed, in passageways, in the aircraft hangar, catwalks, or on the flight deck for short periods of time before they were back into action again. After the completion of this exercise everyone was very tired and sleepy but pride and self-satisfaction was visible in every man because he had done his job well.

ROPEVAL 1-70 was completed on 11 March and DULUTH returned to U.S. Naval Station, San Diego, California and moored to pier 6 berth 61. The aircraft were now gone, the various staffs and squadron personnel had departed and DULUTH again became an amphibious ship with pier 6 her home for the remainder of the month.

April

DULUTH continued her upkeep period throughout most of April. Final preparations for her WestPac cruise, scheduled to commence on 1 May, were well underway and would be completed by the end of the month. On 21 April DULUTH was underway for the ammunition pier at Seal Beach, California to load "L" Form material. Arrival at Seal Beach was on 22 April, the "L" Form was loaded and DULUTH departed Seal Beach that afternoon for San Diego. On arrival in San Diego the morning of 23 April, DULUTH moored starboard side to pier Lima at NAS North Island to take on automotive gasoline. That afternoon DULUTH shifted her berth from pier Lima NAS North Island to pier 6, berth 62, San Diego Naval Station. During the shift, causeways, to be delivered to Yokosuka, Japan, were loaded in DULUTH's well deck.

A Dependents Cruise had been planned for several weeks and the 24th of April was an ideal day for the cruise. Dependents and friends arrived early on the morning of the 24th and DULUTH was soon underway for the local operating areas to demonstrate her capabilities. Tours were conducted through various parts of the

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5. Annex B - COMASWGRU THREE msg 090454Z March 70; COMFIRSTFLT msg 090614Z March 70; COMASWGRU THREE msg 090720Z March 70; COMPHIBRON FIVE msg 092040Z March 70; CTF 177 msg 101629Z March 70; CTF 170 msg 101827Z March 70.

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ship, ballasting was demonstrated, flight operations conducted, and an air show was performed by an H-46 helicopter from COMPHIBRON FIVE's flag ship, USS OKINAWA (LPH 3). The experience was too much for those that could not find their sea legs and DULUTH's doctor was on hand to give assistance. When the day came to a close everyone had had a wonderful time. DULUTH was moored starboard side to pier 6, berth 61 San Diego Naval Station, for the remainder of the month, and 4 aircraft were loaded on her flight deck for delivery to Hawaii.

May

At 0945, 1 May, DULUTH was underway for a WestPac deployment as a unit of Amphibious Squadron FIVE. The other ships in the squadron included the flag ship USS OKINAWA (LPH 3), USS ANCHORAGE (LSD 3) and the USS MOBILE (LKA 115). This was the first 20 knot Amphibious Squadron and was to become the first 20 knot Amphibious Ready Group.

On the first leg of the Pacific transit, from San Diego to Hawaii, the squadron was involved in the exercise CONVEX 2-70. This was an exercise in Naval Control and Protection of Shipping and it gave the ships OOD's additional experience in formation ship-handling and tactics. The exercise went well and a "Well Done" congratulatory message was received from VADM Aurand, USN, COMASWFORPAC.⁷

Amphibious Squadron FIVE arrived in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on 6 May and DULUTH moored starboard side to pier "K", berth 10 U.S. Naval Station where she offloaded the four aircraft (2/T-28's, 1/CH-3B, 1/A4C) that had been loaded in San Diego.

On 9 May, DULUTH, in company with USS MOBILE and USS ANCHORAGE, was underway from Hawaii enroute to Yokosuka, Japan. The flag ship, USS OKINAWA, was enroute to New Zealand in conjunction with the Coral Sea Celebration festivities. The USS OKINAWA would rendezvous with the other ships of the squadron at Buckner Bay, Okinawa on 2 June.

The transit to Yokosuka, Japan was uneventful, except for rough seas and the loss of 13 May when the International Date Line was crossed. The three ships arrived at Yokosuka on 19 May. DULUTH anchored in anchorage A-12 on arrival in Yokosuka Harbor to offload causeways and then shifted to pier 3, U.S. Naval Station Yokosuka, Japan for the remainder of the stay. The highlight of the stay in Yokosuka for many of DULUTH's crew were the tours to Expo-70 in Osaka, Japan.⁸ Some enjoyed trips to Tokyo and others the local tours.

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6. Annex D - Family Gram dated 31 May 1970.
Annex C - Photo #2
 7. Annex B - COMASWFORPAC msg 160416Z May 70
 8. Annex A - Family Gram dated 31 July 1970.

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The DULUTH, MOBILE, and ANCHORAGE were again underway on 27 May enroute to Buckner Bay, Okinawa. The three ships arrived at Buckner Bay on 29 May. DULUTH anchored in anchorage Sierra Five and began loading Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 1/9. On 30 May DULUTH was underway for Ora Wan, Okinawa to load additional BLT 1/9 equipment, and on completion, returned to Buckner Bay anchorage Sierra Ten. DULUTH shifted to the west side of Navy Pier Buckner Bay on 31 May and completed the loading of BLT 1/9.

June

On 1 June, DULUTH, MOBILE, and ANCHORAGE were assigned to Amphibious Ready Group ALPHA and Task Group 76.4. On 3 June COMPHIBRON FIVE relieved COMPHIBRON NINE and assumed Command of Task Group 76.4, with USS OKINAWA the flag ship for the Task Group.

Prior to departing Buckner Bay on 2 June for Subic Bay, Philippines, DULUTH embarked HC-3 Detachment 104 which included six office 19 men, and 3 helicopters (H-46's) for delivery to Cam Ranh Bay, RVN. DULUTH arrived in Subic Bay on 4 June and anchored at anchorage C-22 and commenced offloading BLT 1/9. Later that day DULUTH shifted to berths 11 and 12 Rivera Pier to continue the offload of BLT 1/9 and to load 2 Napier engines and a generator for Da Nang, RVN. On 5 June DULUTH shifted from Rivera pier to anchorage F-1 to await the arrival of U.S. Navy Midshipmen, most of whom were to be transferred to other ships at Da Nang and Yankee Station. Others would spend their summer cruise on DULUTH. While awaiting the arrival of the midshipmen, DULUTH loaded an H-3 helicopter for further transfer to USS AMERICA (CVA 66) on Yankee Station. At approximately 2400 hours the midshipmen arrived and DULUTH was soon underway in the early hours of 6 June, enroute to Da Nang to conduct Wet Well lifts.

On 7 June, DULUTH arrived off-shore Cam Ranh Bay where HC-3 Det 104 departed after experiencing difficulty starting one of their helicopters. The difficulty was solved by flying a hydraulic starter out to DULUTH from NAF Cam Rahn.

On 8 June, DULUTH arrived at Da Nang Harbor and anchored at anchorage 15 where the 2 engines, generator, and some of the midshipmen were offloaded. That afternoon DULUTH was underway for Yankee Station.

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DULUTH arrived at Yankee Station on 9 June and offloaded the H-3 helicopter and most of the midshipmen. While there, DULUTH also UNREPED from the USS TULUGA (AO 62) and received 121,839 gallons of NSFO. After the UNREP and offload, DULUTH was underway for Da Nang Harbor again and arrived there on 10 June. DULUTH anchored at anchorage 24 in Da Nang Harbor and loaded YFU 18, 3 engines, and 3 Conex boxes for delivery to Subic Bay. DULUTH departed Da Nang on the afternoon of 10 June and arrived in Subic Bay on the morning of 12 June to offload. DULUTH was again underway that afternoon for Da Nang and other Wet Well lifts.

DULUTH arrived at anchorage 8 in Da Nang Harbor on 14 June and loaded YFU-52. After the loading was complete, DULUTH was underway for Subic Bay, P.I. The arrival at anchorage in Subic Bay was on 16 June and YFU-52 was offloaded. The backload of BLT 1/9 began on 20 June.

During the week of 21-28 June, DULUTH conducted Amphibious Training Exercises as a part of Task Group 76.4 and Amphibious Ready Group ALFA. The exercises were conducted in the local Subic operating areas and landings were made in the Zambales training area. The exercises included LVT launches and recoveries, helicopter operations, and gunnery exercises.⁹ On 24 and 25 June, TG 76.4 participated in ASWEX 4-70 by making a transit through the ASWEX OPAREA. The Task Group was enroute to a MOD LOC off the coast of Vietnam for an UNREP of opportunity. A message of appreciation was received from COMDESRON ELEVEN for this participation.¹⁰ On 26 June, DULUTH UNREPED from USS MATTAPONI (AO 41) and received 142,337 gallons of NSFO. After the week of training, DULUTH anchored at anchorage G-2 at Subic Bay on 29 June and offloaded BLT 1/9. On 30 June, DULUTH, in company with USS OKINAWA, USS MOBILE, and USS ANCHORAGE, departed Subic Bay enroute to Sasebo, Japan for R & R.

During the month of June DULUTH concluded a drive for the Navy Relief Society Annual Call for Contributions. The effectiveness of the appeal resulted in 100% participation and a total contribution of \$1765.25. DULUTH was the leader in her Class and a congratulatory message was received from COMPHIBRON FIVE commending DULUTH's enthusiastic campaign.¹¹

9. Annex E - Photo #4.

10. Annex B - COMDESRON ELEVEN msg of 251325Z June 1970.

11. Ibid - COMPHIBRON FIVE msg of 082345Z July 1970.

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July

The first day of July found DULUTH conducting a VERTREP with the USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS 3) while enroute to Sasebo, Japan. The VERTREP provided 37 tons of needed provisions and was the first VERTREP of the year for DULUTH.

DULUTH arrived at Sasebo, Japan on 3 July and moored portside to berth India - 1. However on 4 July, DULUTH was underway to mooring bouy 17 because of the threat of Typhoon OLGA. On 5 July, after the typhoon threat was over, DULUTH again shifted to India basin for the remainder of her stay in Sasebo.

Liberty in Sasebo included tours of Nagasaki, Arita and the Saikai Bridge, Unzen National Park, a two-day trip to Expo 70, and many other sites. A Captain's Personnel Inspection and Awards Ceremony was held on 10 July and 64 awards were received by members of the ship's crew.¹²

Liberty in Sasebo was over on 15 July and DULUTH was underway again enroute to Buckner Bay, Okinawa. DULUTH arrived at Buckner Bay on 16 July and loaded LCU 1616 and a UH-1E helicopter to be delivered to Subic Bay. After the onload was complete, DULUTH was underway for Subic Bay. DULUTH arrived at Subic Bay anchorage on 19 July and began loading BA and "L" Form ammunition and offloading the LCU 1616 and the UH-1E helicopter. On 20 July DULUTH backloaded BLT 1/9. On 21 and 22 July, DULUTH, as a part of Task Group 76.4, conducted amphibious training in the Zambales training area. The waterborne ship-to-shore and helo lifts were impressive and the Task Group received a "Well Done" from CTG 76.4/79.4.¹³

On 23 July the Task Group proceeded to a MOD LOC off the coast of Vietnam for an UNREP of opportunity and to conduct Task Group tactics training. On 25 July an UNREP was made with the USS SACRAMENTO (AOE 1) and DULUTH received 99,495 gallons of NSFO. After the UNREP the Task Group proceeded back to Subic Bay while continuing with tactics training. The Task Group arrived in Subic on 26 July and DULUTH anchored in an anchorage 650 yards southeast of bouy 19. On 27 July the Task Group was again underway for Buckner Bay, Okinawa

On 28 July, DULUTH participated in gunnery exercises with the other ships in the Task Group and was named "Top Gun" for PHIBRON FIVE after shooting down four sleeves and getting 8 TTB's on the fifth sleeve.¹⁴

12. Annex D - Family Gram dated 31 July 1970.

13. Annex B - CTG 76.4/79.4 msg 221205Z July 1970.

14. Annex B - USS DUNCAN msg 271541Z July 1970; USS ANCHORAGE msg 280811Z July 1970; COMPHIBRON FIVE msg 290340Z July 1970; USS DULUTH msg 290434Z July 1970.

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The Task Group arrived in Okinawa on 31 July and commenced off-loading BLT 1/9 and loading BLT 2/9. DULUTH anchored off Ora Wan Bay, Okinawa on 31 July and later that same day shifted to an anchorage at Chin Wan Bay to complete the loading of BLT 2/9.

August

DULUTH was underway from Chin Wan Bay on 1 August and moored starboard to Navy Pier Buckner Bay, Okinawa and remained there until 6 August. On 6 August the Task Group was again underway for a VER-TREP/UNREP of opportunity off the coast of RVN, and then to Subic Bay. During this transit the Task Group conducted carrier qualifications and tactics training. On 10 August, DULUTH conducted a vertical and span wire replenishment from the USS SACRAMENTO (AOE 1) and received provisions and 148,493 gallons of NSFO.

The Task Group arrived at Subic Bay on 13 August and immediately began amphibious training in the Zambales training area. The training included landings by air and sea and lasted throughout 13, 14, and 15 August. On 16 August Task Group 76.4 conducted a beach survey of beach NIS 306, Mindoro, P.I. On 17 August the Task Group arrived back at Subic Bay and commenced offloading BLT 2/9. DULUTH remained at anchor 650 yards from bouy 19 until 19 August and then shifted to starboard side USS MOBILE (LKA 115) at berths 9 and 10, Rivera pier, for upkeep until 28 August.

The 26th of August was a big day for Amphibious Ready Group ALFA. This day was set aside for a field-day at Grande Island and sports events of almost every kind were held between the Navy and Marine personnel of the Ready Group. A message expressing appreciation to all hands was received from CTG 76.4/CTG 79.4.¹⁵

DULUTH was back at work on 28 August and was soon underway for Leyte Warf at Subic Bay to load ammunition. After the ammo was loaded, DULUTH proceeded to anchorage 650 yards from bouy 19 and on 29 August started the backload of BLT 2/9. On 30 August DULUTH shifted to anchorage B-16 to backload LVT's and remained there until 31 August when she was underway again to participate in ASW and AAW exercises in the local Subic operating areas.

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15. Annex B - CTG 76.4/79.4 msg 280100Z August 1970.
Annex D - Family Gram dated 30 September 1970.

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September

DULUTH arrived back in Subic Bay on 3 September and anchored at anchorage C-8. On 4 September DULUTH shifted to anchorage G-4 and loaded 178 pallets of "L" Form ammunition. After the ammunition was loaded, DULUTH shifted anchorage to 650 yards southeast of bouy 19 and remained there until 7 September.

On 7 September, ARG ALFA was underway for R & R in Hong Kong. Prior to arrival in Hong Kong, TG 76.4 conducted an UNREP with the USS ASHTABULA (AO 51) on 9 September and DULUTH received 85,754 gallons of NSFO. On 10 September the ARG arrived in Hong Kong and DULUTH moored to bouy A-35. However, the threat of Typhoon Georgia made the stay in Hong Kong a short one and required the ARG to get underway on 12 September to avoid the typhoon. After two days of typhoon evasion the ARG returned to Hong Kong on 14 September and DULUTH anchored in Junk Bay until departure on 19 September.

Hong Kong was enjoyed by all hands and the departure on 19 September came too soon for most, but it was now time to bid farewell to this fabulous liberty port. The ARG arrived in Subic Bay on 21 September and conducted amphibious training with a landing in the Zambales training area. After the landing, DULUTH anchored in anchorage F-1 to offload BLT 2/9 and to make preparations for wet well lifts to Da Nang.

On 22 September, DULUTH loaded two LCVP's to be delivered to Vung Tau, RVN. And on 24 September DULUTH was underway for Da Nang. DULUTH arrived in Da Nang on 26 September and loaded two LCM-8's for Vung Tau and was underway that same day for Song Bo De, RVN. On arrival at Song Bo De on 28 September, DULUTH loaded an LCM-6 and an LCM-3 and was again underway, this time for Vung Tau. DULUTH arrived at Vung Tau on the afternoon of 28 September and offloaded 2 LCVP's, 2 LCM-8's, 1 LCM-6, 1 LCM-3, and was underway before dark for Que Nhon, RVN. During a short stop at Que Nhon on 29 September, DULUTH loaded 1 LCM-6, and 1 LCM-3 and was underway for Da Nang. DULUTH arrived in Da Nang, anchorage 15, on 30 September and was met by the prospective Commanding Officer of DULUTH, Captain J.E. MITCHEL USN, who reported aboard to assume command. DULUTH loaded cargo at Da Nang and was underway in the afternoon of 30 September for Subic Bay.

October

DULUTH arrived at Subic Bay on 2 October and anchored 650 yards from bouy 19 to offload the cargo and boats that were transported from Vietnam. After the offload was complete, DULUTH was underway

10
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for Da Nang in the afternoon for additional wet well lifts. On arrival at anchorage 13 in Da Nang on 4 October, DULUTH loaded LCU 1619 with palletized cargo, and in addition, conducted a Change of Command Ceremony in which Captain J. E. MITCHELL, USN, relieved Captain Robert E. MOORE, USN, as Commanding Officer.¹⁶

After the Change of Command Ceremony Captain MITCHELL got DULUTH underway and proceeded to Subic Bay. On arrival in Subic on 6 October, DULUTH offloaded LCU 1619 and the palletized cargo and remained starboard side to pier 2 and 3 for upkeep.

On 12 October liberty was cancelled because of the threat of Typhoon JOAN and on 13 October BLT 2/9 was backloaded and ARG ALFA was underway for typhoon evasion. After two days of evading the typhoon, ARG ALFA arrived back in Subic Bay on 15 October and loaded BLT 2/9 ammunition. That same afternoon ARG ALFA was underway for R & R at Manila, P.I. The ARG arrived at Manila on the morning of 16 October and DULUTH moored to pier 15 for the weekend of R & R.

DULUTH loaded 140 Phillipine Marines and departed Manila on 19 October with the ARG to conduct a joint U.S./Phillippine exercise (Fortress Light). However, the exercise was cancelled on 20 October and the Phillipine Marines were offloaded at anchorage C-3 in Subic Bay and the ARG was underway for Disaster Relief in the Lagonoy Gulf area to assist the victims of Typhoon JOAN.

The ARG arrived at Lagonoy Gulf area at first light on 22 October and DULUTH was stationed at the east end of the Gulf at Cabugao Bay, just south of Catanduanes Island and off-shore Virac, P.I. She was utilized as a fuel stop and ready deck ship. USS OKINAWA (LPH 3) was stationed at the West end of Lagonoy Gulf and USS ANCHORAGE (LSD 36) was assigned a station in between DULUTH and OKINAWA as a ready deck. The area involved in the Disaster Relief project was approximately 80 miles by 20 miles and included the cities of Virac and Naga, P.I. The disaster relief action required helicopter lifts of food and medical aid to all the typhoon devastated villages and barrios in the area.¹⁷

The disaster relief action continued until 25 October with 366 helicopter hours flown, 675,715 pounds of relief material delivered and countless individuals benefitted from the effort. This was undoubtedly the most satisfying and rewarding event during the WestPac

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16. Annex A - Change of Command Phamplet dated 4 October 1970.
Annex D - Family Gram dated November 1970.
Annex E - Photo #5.
 17. Annex D - Family Gram dated 8 November 1970.
Annex C - All News Releases.

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cruise and congratulatory messages were received from numerous commands.¹⁸

After completion of the disaster relief action on 25 October, DULUTH proceeded to Subic Bay and arrived there on 26 October for an overnight fuel stop. On 27 October, DULUTH was underway for R & R in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. DULUTH arrived at Kaohsiung on 9 October and remained there until 3 November moored to bouy 1.

November

The crew of DULUTH enjoyed liberty in Kaohsiung and their conduct ashore was without incident. A message from SOPA Kaohsiung attests to the outstanding deportment displayed by DULUTH's crew while there.¹⁹

On 3 November DULUTH was underway from Kaohsiung to Subic Bay and making preparation for COMPHIBRON FIVE's Administrative Phase of Command Inspection to be conducted between 10 and 16 November. DULUTH arrived at Subic on 7 November and launched the LVT's prior to mooring starboard side to Rivera pier berth 11 and 12 for her last upkeep period in Subic during this deployment.

A Personnel Inspection was conducted on 9 November by Captain MITCHELL and on 10 November the Administrative Phase of Command Inspection was begun by the staff of COMPHIBRON FIVE. Preparation was also being made to return to CONUS and retro-grade material, including 133 pallets of class 4 "L" Form, was loaded on board on 15 November for the transit back to California. A Personnel Inspection by COMPHIBRON FIVE (Captain John La Cava, USN) was held on 16 November which concluded the Administrative Phase of the Command Inspection. When the final tally was made, DULUTH received an overall grade of Excellent for the inspection, with three deficiencies/discrepancies requiring correction.²⁰

The Combined Federal Campaign of San Diego County was conducted during the period 1 October through 15 November 1970. DULUTH's participation in the campaign resulted in \$3,222.65 total donations

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18. Annex B - CTG 76.4 msg 260615Z OCT 70; CTF 76 msg 260918Z OCT 70; COMUSNAVPHIL msg 261030Z OCT 70; COMSEVENTHFLT msg 280530Z OCT 70; CINCPAC msg 300308Z OCT 70; ADMIN CINCPACFLT msg 060448Z NOV 70; COMSEVENTHFLT msg 090122Z NOV 70.
 19. Annex B - SOPA Kaohsiung msg 031010Z NOV 1970.
 20. Annex F - Commanding Officer of USS DULUTH memorandum dated 2 December 1970.
- Annex E - Photo's #6 and #7.
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and third place in the final standings of force units of Commander Amphibious Group ONE, having been topped by two patrol Gunboats (PG's). Congratulatory messages were received from COMPHIBGRU ONE and COMPHIBRON FIVE and certificates in recognition of DULUTH's outstanding performance during the campaign were received from Commander Amphibious Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.²¹

On 17 November, DULUTH backloaded BLT 2/9 and loaded additional retro-grade material including LCU 1616. On 18 November, Task Group 76.4 was underway to Buckner Bay, Okinawa for the ARG turnover and to load retro-grade material. Task Group 76.4 arrived at Buckner Bay on 21 November. The ARG turnover began with the offload of BLT 2/9 and the assumption of command of CTG 76.4 by COMPHIBRON THREE on 22 November.

Beach Master Unit ONE, DET. Charlie, was loaded on board DULUTH on 22 November for the transit back to CONUS. On 23 November, DULUTH continued with the loading of retro-grade material which included 3 Dump Trucks, 13 Conex boxes, 4 LVT's, an LCU, and a tractor. After the retro-grade material was loaded, DULUTH was underway for Yokosuka Japan in company with the flag ship USS OKINAWA (LPH 3), and USS ANCHORAGE (LSD 36). Yokosuka would be the last port-call before the Pacific transit to CONUS.

The three ships arrived at Yokosuka on 25 November and began loading additional retro-grade material. DULUTH moored starboard side to Dry Dock #6 berth 15 on arrival and loaded 14 LCVP's, 2 LCM-6's, an LCM-3, a motor whale boat, a mobile crane, a rough terrain forklift, and a tractor. The remainder of the stay in Yokosuka was for additional upkeep prior to the Pacific transit and for last minute shopping for the crew. On 29 November every member of the crew was ready to get underway for San Diego, California. DULUTH joined the other ships in the squadron and course was set for San Diego.

December

During the transit to San Diego the weather was fair and sunny, the seas were at our backs and a 19 knot plus SOA was maintained. On 2 December, PHIBRON FIVE chopped to COMFIRSTFLT. The International Date Line was crossed on 4 December and a day was added for 13 May which was missed on the transit to WestPac. The seas were exceptionally smooth and the Squadron arrived in San Diego on the morning of 10 December. DULUTH moored to berth 56 pier 5 Naval Station San Diego and a jubilant and tearful Homecoming was experienced by everyone.

21. Annex B - COMPHIBGRU ONE msg 020137Z DEC 70; COMPHIBRON FIVE msg 032153Z DEC 70; COMPHIBPAC ltr ser 1R-4509 of 11 DEC 70.

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The cruise was over and congratulatory messages were received from COMPHIBRON FIVE and COMPHBPAC for the successful accomplishments during the deployment. In addition, every member of the crew, during the Phillipine Disaster Relief Operation, would receive the Phillipine Republic Presidential Unit Citation Badge.²²

DULUTH offloaded most of the retro-grade material during the remainder of the month and the crew enjoyed a much deserved leave and upkeep period.

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22. Annex B - COMPHIBRON FIVE msg 090430Z December 1970; COMPHIBPAC msg 090513Z December 1970; CINCPACREP/COMUSNAVPHIL msg 171202Z December 1970.

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3. Special Topics

a. Operational Statistics: The ship's operational statistics for the calendar year 1970 are contained in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

b. Material and Weapons Systems:

(1) Weapons systems performance: No major changes on the 3"/50 mounts or the fire control systems were made during the year. The systems have been quite dependable.

(2) Material Performance: DULUTH experienced no major material malfunctions during 1970 with the exception that both boilers had to be re-bricked due to the high steaming rates encountered during the deployment. Minor casualties which occurred resulted in no noteworthy material damage.

c. Major Conversions and Modifications: There were no major conversions or modifications during the year.

d. Communications: There were no changes or modifications to communication facilities during 1970. Communications traffic volume for the year is indicated in Table 3.

e. Supply and Logistics:

(1) Supply and logistics statistics are contained in the Operational Statistics Table 1.

(2) The ship did not experience any major supply or logistics problems in 1970.

(3) The ship was granted \$376,045.12 in OPTAR Funds from Type Commander. Extensive habitability work was accomplished in public areas of the ship; notably the Wardroom, CPO Quarters, First Class Mess and Crew's Lounge. This program greatly increased the attractiveness of these areas.

(4) DULUTH continued to benefit from Project SAVE (reallocation of excess repair part assets from other commands). This aid in increased logistics support while not incurring charges against the ship's OPTAR.

f. Personnel, Administrative, Manning Level, and Legal:

(1) Administrative, legal and personnel statistics are contained in the Personnel Section of Operational Statistics Table 2.

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(2) During the calendar year of 1970, DULUTH went from "feast to famine" in regard to personnel manning level. The first of the year showed over 600 personnel, almost double the established EDP, whereas at the year's end only 334 personnel remained attached. This drastic reduction is attributed to reduction in force and many early out programs. The overall reductions in manpower throughout the Naval Establishment forced early releases for 97 of DULUTH's enlisted men. At the years end, deficiencies were noted in all pay grades.

(3) 112 men were advanced in pay grades E-4 and above.

g. Medical Activities:

(1) Medical statistics are contained in the Operational Statistics Table 2.

(2) During the 1970 calendar year the medical department provided services for an average ship's crew of 430 men. In addition, medical services were provided for 500 embarked marines while in WestPac. The ship's medical department consisted of one physician and three corpsmen and was supplemented by embarked marine medical personnel.

In the present structure of the Amphibious Ready Group, the LPD assumes a role of a secondary casualty receiving ship. During the 1970 eight month deployment to WestPac no casualties were received and consequently efforts were concentrated on providing outpatient dispensary service with in-bed facilities for as many as ten patients. The latter necessitated optimal usage of the laboratory, pharmacy, and x-ray capabilities.

The vast majority of medical treatment was directed toward infectious diseases, neuro-psychiatric problems, minor extremity trauma, and surgical procedures. Surprisingly few cases of malaria or dysentery were noted during the far east deployment.

The medical department was also involved in the lending of aid to victims of Typhoon JOAN in the Province of Virac in the Central Phillipines area. Embarked physicians and corpsmen provided clinical assistance to hundreds of JOAN's victims and large supplies of bandages and valuable medicinals were distributed to local clinics and hospitals.

The department also continued to provide educational lectures, movies and exhibits to the entire crew. Topics covered included sanitation, prevention of infectious diseases, first-aid, nuclear-biological-warfare safety and other selected topics.

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h. Chaplain's Activities:

(1) Moral Guidance statistics are contained in the Operational Statistics Table 3. There were 2,680 people who attended Sunday Worship Services, 116 attended Bible Studies, and 788 attended morning devotions aboard DULUTH during the year.

(2) Daily services were held during Holy Week with a total attendance of 81 people.

(3) A Good Friday ecumenical worship service was held with a total attendance of 41 Catholics and Protestants.

(4) Wednesday evening prayer meetings were held in the Chaplain's stateroom during the deployment and a total attendance of 125 were recorded.

(5) There were six organized Catholic church parties to depart the ship and attend Chapel services at various stations.

(6) Five family grams were written and mailed out to 2400 people during 1970.

(7) The Chaplain planned and conducted five retreats during the year with a total attendance of 117.

(8) A fishing trip was arranged for the ship's crew in Acapulco, Mexico.

(9) The Chaplain planned and conducted a pre-deployment briefing for DULUTH wives prior to the ship's deployment in May 1970

(10) Letters were sent to all DULUTH's parents or wives giving information concerning what to do should a crisis arise while the ship was deployed.

(11) A special tour of Corregidor was arranged while the ship was in Subic Bay, P.I.

(12) The Chaplain planned and conducted a dependent children's Christmas party with attendance of 81 children. The party consisted of a gift for each child, Santa Claus, cartoons, refreshments, singing of Christmas Carols, and sharing the Christmas story.

(13) The Chaplain planned and conducted a marriage clinic aboard DULUTH. The clinic was held for four days (one hour each day). The daily average attendance was 62.

i. Community Relations and Civic Action:

(1) The Chaplain arranged for a team of young people from a local church to come aboard and present a musical program. DECLASS

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(2) The Chaplain planned and conducted a party aboard ship for Japanese Orphans, ages 8-12.

(3) The Chaplain, six sailors, and four marines spent a day working at the Taiwan Christian Children's House in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. A portion of the outside of the building was painted, screens were repaired, and windows were replaced.

j. Disaster Relief, Rescues, and other Humanitarian Operations:

(1) DULUTH provided Disaster Relief to the people of the Republic of the Philippines, where Typhoon JOAN had left more than 600 dead and 80,000 people homeless. Through extensive helicopter operations, over 600,000 pounds of foodstuffs and badly needed supplies were provided, and medical assistance was rendered to villages isolated by flooding and landslides. (See Annex's B and C and Family Gram dated 8 November 1970 in Annex D.)

k. Notable Records or "Firsts":

(1) First LPD to refuel Patrol Gunboats.

(2) First LPD to become an operational unit of a 20 knot Amphibious Squadron. On 1 May DULUTH deployed to the Western Pacific as a member of the first deploying squadron of PHIBPAC "Greyhounds", a squadron capable of sustained speeds of 20 knots.

(3) On 2 March DULUTH began a nine day participation in ROPEVAL 1-70 during which she assumed the role of a CVS, and with the embarked staff of COMASWGRU THREE, RADM Gillette, assumed the direction and co-ordination of the anti-submarine forces protecting a fleet of nearly forty ships. This was the first time an LPD had been utilized for such a role.

(4) DULUTH surpassed previous flight deck operations for an LPD with 2,671 landings recorded for the year.

l. Articles and radio or television programs relating to the command:

(1) All News articles relating to the command are found in Annex C. There were no related radio or television programs.

m. Distinguished Visitors and the Nature of Visit:

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(1) On 18 February COMPHIBPAC, VADM Smith, USN, hosted a luncheon for fifteen prominent guests of the Secretary of the Navy aboard DULUTH. The luncheon was preceded by a tour of the ship and a slide presentation of the many facets of DULUTH.

(2) On 2 March COMASWGRU THREE, RADM Gillette, USN, and his staff embarked on DULUTH to assume command and control of the ASW forces participating in the fleet exercise ROPEVAL 1-70.

(3) On 3 March COMFIRSTFLT VADM Kidd, USN, boarded DULUTH for an official visit to observe the conduct of operations aboard DULUTH during her participation in ROPEVAL 1-70.

(4) On 5 March the Secretary of the Navy, John Chaffee, came aboard for an official visit. While aboard the Secretary met with the ship's officers for an informal question and answer period and lunched with the CPO's of DULUTH.

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