

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
U.S.S. JOHN S. MCCAIN (DDG-36)
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

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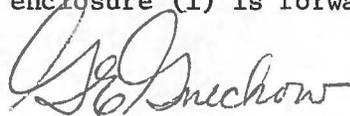
From: Commanding Officer, USS JOH S. MCCAIN (DDG-36)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: Command History, 1972

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5720.12B

Encl: (1) Summary of Operations, 1972

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded.


G. E. GNECKOW

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Director of Naval History
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USS JOHN S. McCAIN (DDG-36) SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 1972

A very eventful 1972 began quietly enough for USS JOHN S. McCAIN (DDG-36), under the command of Commander C. Neil AMMERMAN, USN, as she spent the first three weeks in her homeport of San Diego, California, a member of Destroyer Squadron 23, Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla 11, First Fleet.

On 24 January, McCAIN got underway for a week's anti-submarine exercise with the USS TICONDEROGA (CVS-14) and ASW Group Three in the Southern California Operational Area, returning to port on 28 January.

On 7 February, McCAIN left port to take part in Project Rice, a test of aerial intelligence cameras, and to fire a surface-to-surface Tartar missile. Upon completion of those two exercises, the ship turned south for Acapulco, Mexico.

On 11 February, the ship detoured to rescue four crew members of the sailboat "White Caps" who had run out of food and water and were becalmed enroute to Acapulco. McCAIN took the small boat in tow overnight and cast it off near shore in the rising morning breeze on 12 February.

After stopping for fuel in Manzanillo on 13 February, McCAIN dropped anchor in Acapulco on 14 February. After a two-day stop, the ship headed back north and spent the period from 19 February until 3 March moored at the U. S. Naval Station, San Diego. On 4 March the ship moved to the Broadway piers and hosted nearly 2,000 visitors during a two-day stint as general visit ship.

On 6 March, JOHN S. McCAIN got underway for a week's anti-submarine operation with ASW Group Three, during which time the ship completed a successful torpedo firing against a live submarine.

The ship returned to San Diego on 10 March and began preparing for a Readiness and Operational Evaluation scheduled for 18 April in the Southern California operational area. But as it developed, those preparations were to be used elsewhere.

On 7 April, the ship was notified that it would soon deploy to the Western Pacific in response to the invasion of the Republic of Vietnam by North Vietnamese forces.

The ship left San Diego 10 April, stopping for fuel in Pearl Harbor on 15 April, and Guam on 23 April. JOHN S. McCAIN joined the Seventh Fleet on 21 April. Following a two-day stop in Subic Bay 26 and 27 April, the ship headed for the combat zone.

JOHN S. McCAIN joined the battle for Quang Tri on 30 April, drew her first hostile fire that day, and participated in the evacuation of Quang Tri City on 1 May before heading north for a two-day stint on North Search and Rescue station in the Tonkin Gulf.

The ship rejoined Task Unit 70.8.9 off Quang Tri on 8 May and remained there until 4 June, serving as flagship for Commander Destroyer Squadron 19 and Commander Destroyer Squadron 36 as they directed naval gunfire support operations, including landing zone preparation fire for Song Thanh 6-72, the Republic of Vietnam's first successful helicopter-borne counter-attack. One of the highlights of that first line period was a visit by Admiral B. A. CLAREY, USN, Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

On 5 June, the ship departed for Subic Bay having fired 4,628 rounds. After a week in port, McCAIN returned to the Gunline on 16 June, and embarked Commander Destroyer Squadron 15. On 30 June, Commander Destroyer Squadron 36 returned aboard to reassume duties as Gunline Commander. On 1 July, McCAIN became a member of Destroyer Squadron Five.

During her second line period, McCAIN supported operations in Song Thanh 8A-72 and Lam Son 72, and fired 3,953 rounds before her departure for Sasebo, Japan, on 19 July.

JOHN S. McCAIN safely arrived in Sasebo after dodging typhoons Rita and Tess and remained in that Japanese port through 31 July, departing on 1 August.

McCAIN arrived back off the familiar coast of Quang Tri Province on 4 August, and commenced fire missions again in support of Operation Lam Son. During this period the ship again served as flagship for Commander Destroyer Squadron 36 and Commander Destroyer Squadron 15.

On 24 August, the ship played host to the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Elmo R. ZUMWALT, Jr., and Commander Seventh Fleet, Vice Admiral James L. HOLLOWAY, III, and on 26 August, to Commander Cruiser Destroyer Force Pacific Fleet, Rear Admiral M. W. WOODS. On 27 August, Lieutenant General Ngo Quang Truong, Commanding General of the Republic of Vietnam's I Corps and Military Region I, and Major General H. H. COOKSEY, USA, Commanding General First Regional Assistance Command, visited the ship.

McCAIN left the Gunline on 29 August for Hong Kong having fired 2,675 rounds during her third line period.

The ship spent 30 August until 3 September in Hong Kong, and 5 September until 18 September in Subic Bay before returning to the war zone.

On 20 September, McCAIN reported to Task Unit 77.1.2, Northern Linebacker Strike Group, for operations against North Vietnamese targets. The ship fired 675 rounds during ten nights of Linebacker strikes against targets at Vinh, Dong Hoi, and in the Bay of Brandon. During this time, the ship served as flagship for Commander Destroyer Squadron 19.

On 10 October, the ship rejoined units on the Gunline, now designated as Task Group 75.9 and remained there until 18 October, firing a total of 4,714 rounds during her fourth line period.

On 19 October, McCAIN turned her bow eastward completing the last of four tours off the Quang Tri coast, having fired a grand total of 16,645 rounds.

After spending two days in Subic Bay, McCAIN joined four other ships in returning to the West Coast, stopping for fuel in Guam on 26 October, and Pearl Harbor on 2 November.

On 9 November, JOHN S. McCAIN passed underneath the Coronado Bridge in her homeport of San Diego, having been deployed just under seven months.

The remainder of the year was spent at the San Diego Naval Station in post-deployment standdown, leave and upkeep and in preparation for an upcoming overhaul.