

U.S.S. MANSFIELD DD-728

FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, 96601

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From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. MANSFIELD (DD-728)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B9)

Subj: Annual Revision to USS MANSFIELD (DD-728) Ship's History;
submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12
(b) CINCPACFLTINST 5750.2

Encl: (1) Annual Revision to USS MANSFIELD (DD-728) Ship's
History - 1966 (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.
2. In accordance with reference (b), a complete copy of this report is submitted herewith to CINCPACFLT.
3. The report has been delayed in order to acquire portions of the Annex material.


JACK R. GRIFFIN

Copy to:
CINCPACFLT (complete)
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[1966]

ANNUAL REVISION TO
USS MANSFIELD (DD-728)
SHIP'S HISTORY
(1966)

PART I, CHRONOLOGY OF HIGHLIGHTS

1. 19 January to 7 February: Transit of Pacific Ocean, from Subic Bay, Philippines to Long Beach, California.
2. 12 April to 21 April: Fleet maneuvers; "Operation Gray Ghost" off the coast of Southern California.
3. 25 June to 15 July: Transit of the Pacific Ocean from Long Beach, California to Yokosuka, Japan. Change of homeport from Long Beach to Yokosuka.
4. 8 August to 19 August: Gunfire support mission off the coast of South Vietnam.
5. 7 September to 16 September: Operations with Task Force 130; Gemini Recovery Ship (alternate).
6. 23 October to 19 November: Junk traffic interdiction and gunfire support mission off the coast of Vietnam.
7. 23 November to 9 December: Station Ship, Hong Kong, B.C.C.

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PART II, BASIC NARRATIVE

The year 1966 began for the USS MANSFIELD (DD-728) under the command of Commander Donald P. NELLIS, USN, at the U.S. Naval Station, Yokosuka, Japan, in an upkeep period. On 8 January 1966, the ship got underway enroute to Subic Bay, Philippine Islands. During the trip to Subic Bay, MANSFIELD participated in an anti-aircraft gunnery exercise. Having been in port in Subic Bay from the 12th until the 19th of January, MANSFIELD got underway again enroute to her home port of Long Beach, California. On the trip across the Pacific, the ship stopped at Guam on the 23rd of January for fuel, and stopped again to fuel at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on the 30th of January.

MANSFIELD finally reached Long Beach on 7 February 1966.

From February until the middle of April, MANSFIELD maintained a high degree of material readiness and training with short periods of local operations off the coast of southern California, and time in port in Long Beach. On the 12th of April, the ship left Long Beach to be part of a large First Fleet training exercise named "Operation Gray Ghost." Having completed "Operation Gray Ghost," MANSFIELD returned to Long Beach on April 21st. From April until near the end of June, the ship again operated in the waters off the coast of southern California, and spent time in Long Beach in an upkeep status. Toward the middle of May, MANSFIELD completed Ship Qualification Trials on her Drone Anti-Submarine Helicopters (DASH SQT). During her stay in the United States, the MANSFIELD experienced a 60% turnover of enlisted personnel.

On June 25th, MANSFIELD bid farewell to Long Beach for two years, and got underway enroute to her new home port of Yokosuka, Japan. This trip across the Pacific was broken up by a lay-over in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, where MANSFIELD arrived on the 2nd of July. The ship spent 4 days in port in Pearl Harbor, giving the crew some relaxation and effecting needed repairs before continuing her long voyage to Japan.

On the 15th of July MANSFIELD arrived in Yokosuka; she spent 15 days in her new home port and then got underway enroute to Buckner Bay, Okinawa for a minor anti-submarine warfare exercise. After leaving Okinawa, MANSFIELD headed south toward a station off the coast of the Republic of Vietnam to provide Naval Gunfire Support to operations ashore. On the way to Vietnam, the ship was forced to turn and run into Subic Bay, Philippine Islands. The side trip was necessary to drop off a man who had become seriously ill, and needed hospital care. Continuing toward Vietnam, MANSFIELD arrived on station on the 18th of August. While on station, the ship had occasion to go into the mouth of the Saigon River to deliver gunfire support. From the position the ship gave very effective support to several units in the area.

On the 19th of August, MANSFIELD was relieved, and started back to Yokosuka for liberty and an upkeep period, arriving in Yokosuka on the 26th of August. On the 7th of September, she cast off her lines once again to steam south and take part in the recovery operation for the Gemini XI spacecraft. The ship's function was to cover an area designated as an alternate recovery area in the event that something went wrong, and the astronauts could not bring their craft to earth in the Atlantic as planned. For her special assignment MANSFIELD had

been fitted with a new crane on the fantail; the crane carried a cradle type device that was designed to pick up the Gemini vehicle. The ship had also trained men as swimmers to put in the water and attach a flotation belt to the Gemini vehicle. Though it was a slight disappointment to the men of the MANSFIELD not to be in the actual recovery, everything went well for the Gemini team, and the landing was in the Atlantic as planned. The ship returned to Yokosuka on the 16th of September, and remained there until the 1st of October, when she left enroute to Kobe, Japan, arriving on the 4th of October. The MANSFIELD went to Kobe on a good-will visit, and to let the crew have some rest and relaxation in a port other than Yokosuka. The MANSFIELD had an open house while she was tied up in Kobe, and over 1,000 Japanese citizens from Kobe and the vicinity visited the ship. While in Kobe, the ship sent a group of volunteers to the Kobe Boys Town. The Kobe Boys Town is an orphanage patterned after the Boys Towns in the United States. The MANSFIELD volunteers did a wonderful job of "paint-up", "fix-up" at the Boys Town; replacing broken windows, fixing a leaky roof, and a complete paint job. The day after the work at the Boys Town, MANSFIELD played host to the orphans at the ship. They were given a tour of the ship and treated to a festive dinner in the crew's mess which was followed by a cartoon film show. As the orphans left the ship, their new friends from the MANSFIELD presented them with a large quantity of toys, games and athletic equipment.¹ Also while in Kobe, the ship was joined by two Vietnamese Naval Officers, Ensigns N. LOC and P. PHUNG. These two officers were aboard for a period of indoctrination and training. From Kobe, the ship got underway for Kaohsiung, Taiwan (Formosa) on October 9th. In Kaohsiung MANSFIELD prepared for another anti-submarine

exercise. This was a larger exercise than the first, and required very detailed planning. The ship participated in the ASW exercise for three full days. The entire crew gained much valuable experience, and morale was improved by the opportunity to work together as a team. After the exercise the ship returned to Kaohsiung for two days before getting underway for Subic Bay, Philippines. In Subic Bay, the ship completed some minor repair work, and refueled before getting underway for what was to us then - a classified operation. The operation is now history. The MANSFIELD and one other destroyer were the first Navy ships assigned to interdict enemy shipping off the coast of North Vietnam. The ships' job was to destroy junk and sampan traffic from the North into South Vietnam. This waterborne traffic is one of the Communists' main supply routes for their war of infiltration into South Vietnam. On two occasions, on October 25th, while the ship was cruising off the coast and firing at supply junks headed south, the Communist North Vietnamese opened fire with shore batteries directed at the MANSFIELD. The crew responded superbly during these attacks and the ship scored many hits on the gun emplacements ashore without receiving a scratch.² Having completed ten days of operations in the North, and destroying or damaging 109 enemy craft along the coast of North Vietnam, the MANSFIELD turned south for more gunfire support duties. Upon completion of this last mission off Vietnam, the MANSFIELD had expended 13,250 rounds of 5" main battery ammunition. MANSFIELD records indicate that this was probably the largest number of main battery rounds fired, up to that time, by any destroyer home-ported in the Western Pacific. For their

ENCLOSURE (1)

part in the ship's performance during the operation off North Vietnam, several officers and men of the MANSFIELD were nominated for awards. On the 19th of November, the ship left the area of Vietnam to go to Hong Kong, British Crown Colony, for duty as the "Station Ship". Getting underway from Hong Kong on 9 December the MANSFIELD again headed for her home port. When the MANSFIELD got to Yokosuka, ENS P. PHUNG and ENS N. LOC departed the ship. ENS PHUNG and LOC learned much about their profession aboard the MANSFIELD, and the crew of the ship learned much about the people of another race from the two cheerful and intelligent young officers. In Yokosuka the ship went through an extended repair period, until after the first of the New Year, 1967. MANSFIELD is a general purpose destroyer and serves as a unit of Destroyer Squadron NINE and Destroyer Division NINETY-TWO. DESRON 9 is commanded by Captain C. F. HELME, USN; DESDIV 92 is commanded by Captain A. G. FRANCH, USN.