

U. S. S. MOLALA (ATF-106)
FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. 96601

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From: Commanding Officer, USS MOLALA (ATF-106)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09B9)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Brief Chronology and Basic Narrative

1. In accordance with reference (a), OPNAV report 5750-1 is submitted covering the period 1 January 1971 through 31 December 1971.


R. J. BRANCO

Part I- BRIEF CHRONOLOGY of IMPORTANT EVENTS

1. MOLALA began the year in Subic Bay, Philippines with a period of upkeep from 1 January 1971 through 18 January. Upon completion of that assignment the ship departed Subic Bay for Vung Tau, South Vietnam to tow VF-866 to Singapore. While enroute with the tow, MOLALA received a distress signal from the British Merchantman, SS VERGMONT, which was dead-in-the water 160 miles away. Proceeding to the scene with VF-866 still in tow, MOLALA also took the British vessel under tow and led her to safe waters where she anchored. The ship then proceeded to Singapore.

2. On 28 February MOLALA assisted the USCGC MORGENTHAU (WHUC-722) which was damaged by an underwater pinnacle in the coastal waters of South Vietnam. Taking the Coast Guard vessel under tow, the two ships arrived in Subic Bay on 6 March.

3. During the remainder of March and April, MOLALA completed the following tows:

- 9 April: Towed YRBM-20 to Subic Bay from Vung Tau.
- 15 April: Departed Subic with AFDL-11 in tow and YFU-24 docked inside. Arrived in Vung Tau 13 April.
- 23 April: Towed YFDL-23 with YFNB docked inside from DaNang to Subic Bay.

4. MOLALA departed Sasebo, Japan on 23 May and arrived in San Diego on 15 June.

5. On 8 July LT. R. J. BRANCO, USN, relieved LT. K. C. ROBERTS, USN of command.

6. MOLALA performed various towing operations during the remainder of 1971:

- 28 July: Towed WLV-612 from Salina Cruz, Mexico to Panama.
- 5 AUG : Towed YRBM-29 and 30 from Panama to San Diego.
- 17 NOV : Towed YFN-954 from San Diego to Seal Beach.
- 18 NOV : Towed YFN-953 and 945 from Seal Beach to San Diego.
- 19 NOV : Towed USS BRADLEY to Long Beach.

Part II- BASIC NARRATIVE

1. General

A. For the first six months of 1971, MOLALA was deployed to WESTPAC under the command of LT.K. C. ROBERTS, USN. From the list of tows contained in Part I, it is quickly evident that the ship was busy during the cruise overseas as well as during her EASTPAC operations where she completed the remainder of the year under the command of LT. R. J. BRANCO, USN.

B. MOLALA'S officers and crew worked hard during the year 1971 but still managed to take time for pleasure and sightseeing. Included among the ports she visited were Hong Kong, Kaohsiung (Taiwan), Sasebo,

Bacolod, Philippines, Acapulco, and the Canal Zone. The ship participated in the "people-to-people" program in Bacolod where the crew painted a school for the blind. In Panama, the crew toured the Canal area after having towed WLV-612 from Salina Cruz, Mexico where the light-ship had been immobile for approximately three weeks. Needless to say, the stop in Panama was especially welcomed by the Coast Guardsmen.

C. From the latter part of August through the early part of October, MOLALA was in a restricted availability in her homeport, San Diego, to correct many varied maintenance problems sustained during her heavy schedule.

D. MOLALA'S operations were not limited to her primary mission of towing as she assisted the Naval Undersea Research Center, San Diego in carrying out sonar research. By serving as platform ship and laying two sets of underwater hydrophones, the ship contributed to this area of research. Additionally, operating with OPTEVFORPAC, Port Hueneme, California, MOLALA assisted in testing of hydrographic sonar research instruments near Anacapa Island.

E. November 1971 was undertaken with MOLALA'S eyes toward WESTPAC. On 2 November the ship entered a two-week interim refresher training period and on 30 November the command began a successful three day salvage training period. Upon completion of the latter, MOLALA was considered to be operationally ready for deployment. The final part of December was spent in a holiday period with all hands enjoying time off prior to the upcoming deployment.

USS MOLALA (ATF-106)

Commanding Officers - Commissioning to 1971

Clem R. Olivier, Jr. (104302)	Lt., USN	1 July 1946 - 13 December 1946
Edwin L. Stark (204380)	Lt., USN	13 December 1946 - 6 March 1947
Lorenzo H. Paquette (199459)	Lt., USN	6 March 1947 - 20 April 1948
Wilson L. Collins (81788)	Lt., USN	20 April 1948 - 2 July 1951 (Lt. Comdr.)
Earl Z. Arthur (300023)	Lt., USN	2 July 1951 - 9 July 1952
Robert F. Reed (199336)	Lt., USN	9 July 1952 - 13 January 1955
Hans P. Hansen (196630)	Lt., USN	13 January 1955 - 2 July 1956
Frank W. McMullen (310218)	Lt., USN	2 July 1956 - 16 September 1957
Archie G. DeRyckere (586931)	Lt. (jg), USN	16 September 1957 - 31 December 1958 (Lt.)
William C. Darwin (551221)	Lt., USN	31 December 1958 - 14 February 1961
George W. Shaffer (555342)	Lt., USN	14 February 1961 - 31 March 1962 (Lt. Comdr.)
Joseph H. Pettigrew (585835)	Lt., USN	31 March 1962 - 27 June 1964 (Lt. Comdr.)
Calvin D. Raymond (617065)	Lt., USN	27 June 1964 - 7 March 1967 (Lt. Comdr.)
Alan B. Flanagan (645695)	Lt., USN	7 March 1967 - 21 December 1968
Keith C. Roberts (660605)	Lt., USN	21 December 1968 through 1970

[Feb-1972 - CO. - Bob Brunco - Lt.]