



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS-3)
CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
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From: Commanding Officer, USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS-3)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP -09B9)

Subj: Command History

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

Encl: (1) Chronology of Outstanding Events 1970

(2) Narrative

(3) Commanding Officer's Biography

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (3) are hereby forwarded.

E.M. Cocke

E.M. COCKE

Copy to:
CINCPACFLT
COMSERVPAC
COMSEVENTHFLT
COMSERVGRU ONE
COMSERVGRU THREE
COMSERVRON SEVEN

CHRONOLOGY OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS 1970

01-03 JAN NIAGARA FALLS in Sasebo

04 JAN Depart Sasebo enroute line-swing

13-25 JAN Replenishment operations in South China Sea

30-03 FEB Visited Hong Kong B.C.C.

10 FEB Replenishment services for TF 71 units

11 FEB - 25 MAR NIAGARA FALLS in Sasebo

12 FEB Change of Command

04-12 APR Replenishment operations in South China Sea

20-29 APR NIAGARA FALLS in Sasebo

02-12 MAY Replenishment operations in South China Sea

21-29 MAY NIAGARA FALLS in Sasebo

01-13 JUN Replenishment operations in South China Sea

23 JUN Operational Readiness Inspection

24-29 JUN NIAGARA FALLS in Sasebo

30 JUN The homeport of NIAGARA FALLS was changed
from Sasebo Japan, to Alameda, California and
the ship was administratively assigned to
COMSERVRON SEVEN

04-12 JUL Replenishment operations in South China Sea

23-27 JUL Visited Hong Kong B.C.C.

31 JUL - 02 SEP NIAGARA FALLS in Sasebo

03 SEP Depart Sasebo For CONUS

Enclosure (1)

05-07 SEP Visited Yokosuka Japan embarked helo detachment
CHC-7 DET 112 for transportation to CONUS

14 SEP Rescued ketch GALILEE crew and salvaged ketch

16-17 SEP Visited Pearl Harbor

24 SEP Offloaded helo detachment in San Diego

26 SEP Arrived Oakland

29 SEP Offloaded ammunition at Ammo Annex, U.S. Naval
Shipyard, Mare Island

30 SEP Shifted berths to Pier 21, U.S. Naval Shipyard,
Mare Island.

30 OCT - 24 NOV Drydocked at Naval Shipyard, Mare Island

25 NOV - 31 DEC Moored Pier 21 Naval Shipyard, Mare Island

Enclosure (1)

COMMAND HISTORY
NARRATIVE 1970

1 January 1970, found USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS-3), a unit of Service Squadron Three, with HC-7 Detachment 112 onboard. In her homeport of Sasebo, Japan busily preparing for her first line swing of replenishment operations in the South China Sea in 1970. Departing Sasebo on 4 January, Captain Andrew F. Huff, USN, Commanding, NIAGARA FALLS made two loading stops in both Kaohsiung, Taiwan, and Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, arriving on Yankee Station, Republic of Vietnam, on 13 January.

Replenishment operations were conducted in waters adjoint to the Republic of Vietnam during the period of 13-25 January. NIAGARA FALLS' scheduled re-provisioning of USS CORAL SEA (CVA-43) could not be completed due to a casualty to one of her elevators. With no commitments scheduled on 16-17 January, NIAGARA FALLS travelled in company with CORAL SEA but was unable to complete the replenishment evolution. During this period CORAL SEA cancelled her original provision requirements for 140 S/T and resubmitted requirements for 95 S/T. Both orders were staged and subsequently restowed. On 22 January, NIAGARA FALLS performed another first by on-loading fresh milk in Camranh Bay for delivery to ships operating in the area off An Thoi, RVN.

NIAGARA FALLS sailed for Hong Kong, B.C.C. after completing her line swing off An Thoi on 25 January. The crew enjoyed visiting Hong Kong during the period 30 January - 04 February. Departing Hong Kong on 04 February, NIAGARA FALLS sailed for Sasebo via Subic Bay for loading operations and services to Task Force Seventy-one units.

Having completed replenishment services to Task Force Seventy-one units the afternoon of 10 February in the vicinity of Sasebo the NIAGARA FALLS' prospective Commanding Officer arrived by helicopter. NIAGARA FALLS entered Sasebo and commenced preparation for a change of command ceremony. During the period of 04 January to 10 February the NIAGARA FALLS serviced 85 customers providing them with over 1,118 short tons of supplies.

On 12 February, Captain Edgar M. Cocke, USN, relieved Captain Andrew F. HUFF, USN as Commanding Officer of USS NIAGARA FALLS. In addition to the U.S. Navy personnel, the people of Sasebo expressed an active interest in the ceremony as evidenced by the large number of Japanese guests and newsmen. During this inport stay NIAGARA FALLS supplied over 349 short tons to 62 customers.

NIAGARA FALLS departed Sasebo on 25 March with Captain Edgar M. Cocke, USN, Commanding, to commence an intensive four-month operational period as the only AFS in WESTPAC. Normal CONUS resupply was diverted from Sasebo to Subic Bay to facilitate resupply. After a two-day stop in Kaohsiung and a one-day stop in Subic Bay for resupply, and embarking the CRUDESPEC Band, NIAGARA FALLS had console with USS PROCYON (AF-61) on 02 April and proceeded to Yankee Station, commencing services there on 04 April. Replenishment operations were in the area off An Thoi, RVN, on 12 April. NIAGARA FALLS SAILED for Sasebo via a two-day resupply stop in Subic Bay.

Enclosure (2)

During the April cruise NIAGARA FALLS enjoyed her finest replenishment material reliability by providing her customer's requirements with 96.9% range and 94.5% depth. The NIAGARA FALLS provisioned 65 customers with 839.2 short tons of supplies.

On 15-16 April, Radm Combs, Commander Service Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet visited NIAGARA FALLS in Subic Bay. The period 20-29 April found NIAGARA FALLS in her homeport of Sasebo, delivering over 176 tons to customers there.

On 30 April, NIAGARA FALLS again departed Sasebo for replenishment operations in the South China Sea, providing services enroute to one Attack Carrier Group and one Amphibious Ready Group. The line swing of 02-11 May was completed without incident and NIAGARA FALLS proceeded to Subic Bay for resupply, arriving there 15 May. During the period 16-17 May, NIAGARA FALLS received over 800 short tons of provisions from USS REGIUS (AF-57), moored outboard of NIAGARA FALLS. NIAGARA FALLS then returned to her homeport of Sasebo for nine days, 21-29 May. During the period of 30 April to 20 May, NIAGARA FALLS transferred over 1114 tons of goods to 58 customers. NIAGARA FALLS departed 30 May for another line swing in the South China Sea. Enroute she replenished the Amphibious Ready Group on 01 JUNE, then arrived on Yankee Station 03 June and terminated the line swing in the vicinity of An Thoi on 11 June.

NIAGARA FALLS added a new first to replenishment by conducting her first "Dragrep" with USS KRISHNA (ARL-38) on 10 June. To make commitments on 10-11 June, NIAGARA FALLS towed KRISHNA alongside at 7 knots while transferring cargo from deck to deck using yard and stay method. The evolution was performed smoothly and without incident.

NIAGARA FALLS then proceeded to Subic Bay, arriving there 14 June. Upon completion of resupply, she sailed for Sasebo on 21 June. From 21 May until 21 June, NIAGARA FALLS resupplied 71 customers with over 812 tons of stores.

NIAGARA FALLS anchored in the outer harbor of Sasebo early on the morning of 23 June and immediately embarked members of Commander Service Squadron Three Staff to observe our annual Operational Readiness Inspection. NIAGARA FALLS returned to Sasebo late in the evening of 23 June with a tired but happy crew. The ship's performance during the ORI was evaluated as excellent.

30 June found NIAGARA FALLS once again enroute to replenishment operations in the South China Sea, however, not as a unit of Service Squadron Three. On 30 June, NIAGARA FALLS' homeport was officially changed from Sasebo, Japan to Alameda, California and the ship was administratively reassigned to Service Squadron Seven.

NIAGARA FALLS conducted her last line swing of 1970 in Vietnamese waters during the period 04-13 July, then proceeded to Subic Bay for off-load of cargo. An attempted consort with REGIUS was unsuccessful on 15 July due to high seas. NIAGARA FALLS off-loaded cargo in Subic Bay 16-20 July. NIAGARA FALLS performed a somewhat unusual service on 04 July by delivering 198 pallets of ship's store special order material to USS AMERICA (CVA-66). This material was ordered from Sasebo and weighed over 125 short tons, having a value in excess of half a million Dollars,

Enclosure (2)

The trip to Subic Bay was somewhat hectic as NIAGARA FALLS rescued a merchant seaman from TEXACO MARACAIBO who was suffering from appendicitis. A rendezvous for a helicopter pick-up in the middle of crowded shipping lanes during heavy fog, was without incident.

NIAGARA FALLS Departed Subic Bay on 21 July enroute to Hong Kong. Her visit there, 23-27 July, was enjoyed by all hands, particularly since some dependents were met there. From 23 June to 31 July NIAGARA FALLS provided just over 1057 tons of supplies to 67 customers.

NIAGARA FALLS departed Yokosuka 5 September for CONUS. On 15 September, while enroute to Pearl Harbor, H.I., a ketch was sighted off the port bow at 0600 in the vicinity of 24-45N, 164-44W. A Hydropac referred to a missing sailboat, GALILEE, enroute to Hawaii from Tahiti, so a decision was made to investigate the contact. NIAGARA FALLS passed the stern of the ketch, which was identified as the GALILEE. A boarding party was sent to vessel. GALILEE's crew, Capt. Julian Ritter, Miss Lauren Knokx, and Mr. Winifried Heiringhoff were emaciated and stated they had been without food for forty-nine days.

GALILEE's crew was transferred to NIAGARA FALLS for medical treatment. They were found to ^{be} suffering from acute starvation and dehydration. The three survivors suffered a total loss of weight of 120 lbs., it was estimated by the Medical Officer that survivors would have lived only four days longer. The NIAGARA FALLS assigned a crew of 6 men to the GALILEE to board, dewater, and prepare her for towing.

NIAGARA FALLS arrived in Pearl Harbor on 18 September, having towed the GALILEE 150 miles and then turning over the tow to USCGC CAPE CORWIN on 16 September. The survivors were transferred into the custody of 14th Naval District Staff Personnel.

After debriefing by COMSERVPAC Staff, NIAGARA FALLS Departed Pearl Harbor for San Diego on 19 September, arriving there 0800, 24 September. HC-7, Det 112 was off-loaded and the ship departed for her new homeport of Alameda at 1600, 24 September.

The ship was met by Captain Gronnemann, Commander Service Squadron Seven, at the Golden Gate Bridge at 0923 on 26 September. NIAGARA FALLS proceeded directly to the Oakland Marine Terminal for off-load of household goods and ship's fill items.

On 29 September, the ship proceeded to Mare Island Ammunition Annex and off-loaded ship's fill ammunition, shifting berths the following day to Pier 21, Mare Island Naval Shipyard.

During the following month, the crew received a well-deserved rest and leave and on 30 October, the NIAGARA FALLS went into drydock remaining there until 25 November, when the NIAGARA FALLS was again afloat and moored at Pier 21, Mare Island Naval Shipyard, where it remained, through the New Year. It is noteworthy to say that by October, over half the crew had been rotated onboard.

In summary for the year, NIAGARA FALLS delivered over 5,468 short tons of stores to 431 customers.

Enclosure (2)