

[1968]

Commanding Officer
USS POWER (DD 839)
FPO New York 09501

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5750

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1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded in accordance with reference (a).

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E. L. HERRING

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USS POWER (DD839)

COMMAND HISTORY

1968

USS POWER (DD839)

COMMAND HISTORY

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USS POWER (DD839)

CHRONOLOGY OF HIGHLIGHTS 1968

The following is a list of major highlights for USS POWER (DD839) during 1968. For elaboration of events see Operations (II-B).

- 19 JAN - 10 FEB Operation SPRINGBOARD including anti-submarine warfare and gunnery exercises.
- 23 JAN - 26 JAN Inport San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 20 JAN Operational Readiness Inspection.
- 31 JAN - 02 FEB Inport St. Croix, Virgin Islands.
- 03 FEB - 06 FEB Operation FIPEX 68, Vieques Island.
- 15 FEB - 16 FEB Underway on six hours notice to plane guard for USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA62).
- 07 MAR - 29 MAR Exercise RUGBY MATCH.
- 20 MAR - 22 MAR Inport St. Croix, Virgin Islands.
- 22 APR - 26 APR Administrative and Material Inspection.
- 01 MAY - 03 JUN Commander Destroyer Squadron FOURTEEN embarked.
- 07 MAY - 15 MAY Type Training, Charleston OPAREAS.
- 27 MAY - 29 MAY Regunned Mounts 51 and 52.
- 04 JUN Embarked SECNAV Guests, Mayport.
- 06 JUN - 10 JUN Inport Norfolk, Virginia. Debarked SECNAV Guests. Embarked Midshipmen. Commenced Midshipmen Training Cruise, LANMIDTRARON 68, which included Exercise PACER RUN. USS POWER (DD839) attached to Orange Surface Raider Forces.
- 21 JUN - 24 JUN Inport St. Croix, Virgin Islands.
- 26 JUN - 27 JUN Inport St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.
- 03 JUL - 08 JUL Inport Tampa, Florida.
- 09 JUL Rescued two Cuban Refugees.
- 17 JUL - 18 JUL Annual Supply Inspection.
- 19 AUG Pre-WESTPAC Deployment Sea Trials.

21 AUG Annual Dependents' Day Cruise.

24 AUG USS POWER (DD839) departed Mayport to commence WESTPAC Deployment.

25 AUG Rendezvous with Destroyer Division 361 for WESTPAC Deployment.

28 AUG CHOP to FIRST Fleet and transit through Panama Canal.

05 SEP - 08 SEP Inport San Diego, California.

14 SEP - 18 SEP Inport Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

21 SEP Brief Fuel Stop, Midway Island.

26 SEP CHOP to SEVENTH Fleet.

28 SEP Brief fuel stop, Guam, Marshall Islands.

02 OCT - 07 OCT Inport, Subic Bay, R.P.

08 OCT Entered YANKEE Station Surveillance Area and Combat Zone.

09 OCT - 13 OCT Gun Support Ship for USS LONG BEACH (CGN 9).

13 OCT - 20 OCT Gun Support Ship for USS MAHAN (DLG 11).

13 OCT Search and Rescue Mission for downed A-6A aircraft.

20 OCT - 29 OCT Gun Support Ship for USS WAINWRIGHT (DLG 28).

29 OCT - 04 NOV Rescue Destroyer for USS CORAL SEA (CVA 43).

04 NOV - 10 NOV Inport Subic Bay, R.P.

13 NOV Type Training Danang, Republic of Vietnam.

14 NOV - 18 NOV Gun Support Ship for USS MAHAN (DLG 11).

18 NOV - 26 NOV Rescue Destroyer for USS CONSTELLATION (CVA 64)

28 NOV Inport Subic Bay, R.P.

03 DEC - 10 DEC Inport Sasebo, Japan. On 5 December attached as Rescue Destroyer to USS HANCOCK (CVA 19).

14 DEC - 19 DEC Inport Hong Kong, British Crown Colony.

22 DEC Detached by USS HANCOCK (CVA 19).

22 DEC - 31 DEC Gun Support Ship for USS WAINWRIGHT (DLG 28).

USS POWER (DD839)
COMMAND ORGANIZATION

Commander Edwin L. HERRING, USN, 566171/1100, served as Commanding Officer, USS POWER (DD839) for the period 1 January through 31 December 1968.

USS POWER (DD839), homeported in Mayport, Florida, is attached to Destroyer Division 141, Destroyer Squadron 14, Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla 12 of the U. S. Atlantic Fleet Cruiser-Destroyer Force. Commencing 25 August 1968, USS POWER (DD839) was attached to Destroyer Division 361 - the "E" Division, so named as a result of each ship in the Division holding her respective Squadron's 1968 Battle Efficiency Award. During the 1968 segment of her WESTPAC tour, and under the command of Commander U. S. SEVENTH Fleet from 26 September to 31 December 1968, POWER fell under the various operational controls of Commander Task Groups 77.5, 77.6, and 77.7 (Rescue Destroyer Duties), Commander Task Unit 77.0.1 (North SAR), Commander Task Unit 77.0.2 (PIRAZ), and Commander Task Element 77.0.1.2 (South SAR). In adherence to Commander Cruiser Destroyer Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet and Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet, USS POWER (DD839) in 1968 maintained a state of training, material readiness, discipline and morale that ensured her the highest degree of combat readiness.

OPERATIONS

USS POWER (DD839) began the calendar year 1968 moored in her homeport, Mayport, Florida. On 19 January, she got underway for a three week period of training exercises, "Operation SPRINGBOARD", which included anti-submarine warfare operations and gunnery exercises. From 3 February to 6 February POWER was anchored off Vieques for GFS FIREX 68 and fired more than 400 rounds from her two dual purpose twin 5"/38 gun mounts for shore bombardment in support of an amphibious landing exercise, FIREX 68. SPRINGBOARD also included some interesting port calls; for in these three weeks, POWER visited San Juan, Puerto Rico (23 January - 26 January) and St. Croix, Virgin Islands (31 January - 2 February). On 29 January POWER received a grade of GOOD (77.9) on her annual Operational Readiness Inspection.

Back in Mayport by 9 February, POWER was underway again on 15 February - this time on a short six hours notice to act as plane guard for the USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA 62). This was considered an outstanding feat of reaction and readiness; at the time, POWER was moored alongside a tender for upkeep with two boilers disassembled for maintenance.

POWER again left her homeport on 7 March for Fleet Exercise, "RUGBY MATCH", which included various anti-submarine warfare exercises, gunnery shoots at Vieques and Culebra, electronic counter-measures drills, and anti-air warfare exercises. A high tempo period of fleet training earned for POWER a well deserved three day inport period from 20 March to 22 March in Fredericksted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands. RUGBY MATCH ended 29 March.

During the inport period from 29 March to 8 May, POWER received her annual Administrative/Material Inspection (22 April-26 April) achieving a score of 94 (EXCELLENT). During this period, POWER's 5"/38 mounts were regunned. POWER departed Mayport on 9 May with units of Destroyer Squadron FOURTEEN for a six day period of type training in the Charleston operating areas. POWER returned to Mayport 16 May. After another brief inport period, POWER got underway on 4 June for her annual Midshipman Cruise, LANTMIDTRARON 68. "The Fleet's Finest" hosted two SECNAV Guests, Mr. Edward A. STEVENSON, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Mr. William H. LUNCHNESS, Clemson University Extension Service, during her transit to Norfolk, Virginia to embark the Midshipmen. From 6 June to 9 June, seven First Class Midshipmen and twenty-seven Third Class Midshipmen, from the U.S. Naval Academy and various NROTC units, were embarked. On 10 June POWER departed Norfolk to become part of the Orange Surface Raiders, together with USS ROBERT K. HUNTINGTON (DD 781) and USS PERRY (DD 844) in Fleet Exercise, "RACER RUN". For a fast-paced six weeks, POWER engaged in realistic Naval exercises (such as the Missile Defense Testing by the Fleet Electronic Warfare Study Group), gave Midshipmen extensive training, and yet had time for interesting port calls to St. Croix, Virgin Islands (21 June-23 June), Roosevelt Roads (24 June-26 June), and for Independence Day, Tampa, Florida (3 July-7 July). At 0735 on 9 July during transit from Tampa to Mayport, POWER's Officer of the Deck sighted a small craft at position LAT 24 degrees 48 minutes North and LONG 80 degrees 25 minutes West signalling for help. Quickly moving to the craft's aid, POWER succeeded

in rescuing two Cuban refugees, Mr. Alberto T. GARCIA and Mr. Carlos Lopez NOA. Assistance in the form of food and water was provided. The refugees were embarked aboard a U.S. Coast Guard Cutter which arrived on the scene at POWER's request. Arriving in Mayport on 10 July, POWER merited a brief leave and upkeep period prior to deployment to the Seventh Fleet and Vietnam. During this time POWER passed her annual Supply Inspection with a grade of GOOD (17 July - 18 July) and on 2 August received notification of winning DESRON 14's Battle Efficiency Award for the second consecutive year. To win this second "E", POWER had met all commitments and had tallied the highest overall score for competitive exercises in Destroyer Squadron FOURTEEN. The formal presentation of the "E" Award was made on 22 August 1968 by Rear Admiral KIDD, Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla TWELVE.

This pre-deployment period included two one-day underway periods - 19 August for pre-deployment sea trials and 21 August for POWER's annual Dependents' Day Cruise. The latter gave POWER wives and families the chance to see a modern, all-purpose destroyer in many of the aspects that constitutes its versatilities as well as to observe its daily routine.

On Saturday, 24 August 1968, USS POWER (DD839) deployed for Vietnam in accordance with CINCLANTFLT Quarterly Employment Schedule 1-68. At 1042 the following day, she rendezvoused with Destroyer Division 361, comprised of USS HUGH PURVIS (DD709), USS DUPONT (DD941), and USS DAVIS (DD937) enroute to the Panama Canal. POWER became part of the "E" Division, so named as a result of each ship being a current holder of her

respective squadron's Battle Efficiency Award. Having won DESRON FOURTEEN's Battle Efficiency "E" for Fiscal Year 1968, POWER assumed a proud place as the "E" Division's "Mayport representative."

The "E" Division transited the Panama Canal and CHOPPED to Commander FIRST Fleet on 28 August. POWER refueled during the night in Rodman, Canal Zone and was underway the next morning enroute to San Diego. POWER arrived in San Diego, California on 5 September and was inport for upkeep until 8 September. Between San Diego and Subic Bay, Philippines, POWER visited for logistic stops Pearl Harbor, Hawaii (14 September - 17 September), Midway Island (21 September), and GUAM, M.I. (23 September). POWER CHOPPED to Commander SEVENTH Fleet on 26 September.

POWER was inport Subic Bay, Philippines from 2 October to 6 October during which time the "E" Division was temporarily broken up. On 7 October, POWER was underway independently for the Gulf of Tonkin and; on 8 October, entered the YANKEE Station Surveillance Area and the Vietnam Combat Zone. On 9 October POWER reported to CTU 77.0.5, USS LONG BEACH (CGN 9), Strike Support Ship, and fulfilled duties as Gun Support Ship ("SHOTGUN").

Detached 13 October, POWER reported to the USS MAHAN (DLG 11) for Search and Rescue (SAR) Gun Support Ship duties. COMDESRON THREE, embarked MAHAN was the SAR Commander. POWER commenced a SAR mission that same day. The two ships conducted a fruitless all-night search for survivors from a downed A6-A

aircraft launched earlier that day from USS CORAL SEA (CVA 43). On 16 October, POWER conducted a SAR mission independently, which terminated when no confirmation was received that an aircraft had, in fact, been downed. Later that day, POWER conducted her first Helo-in-flight refueling (HIFR) with a SAR helicopter also participating in a search effort.

Departing Southern SAR Station 20 October, POWER assumed duties the same day as "SHOTGUN" for the Positive Identification Radar Advisory Zone (PIRAZ) ship, USS WAINWRIGHT (DLG 28). This station was noted for its being the northern-most position of Naval units assigned in the Tonkin Gulf. POWER reported on 29 October to CTG 77.6, USS CORAL SEA (CVA 43), as Rescue Destroyer. The Task Group departed the combat zone for Subic Bay 2 November.

On 4 November, POWER arrived in Subic Bay and remained there for upkeep until 11 November. Underway independently POWER proceeded to Danang, Republic of Vietnam, arriving 13 November for type training and briefings. Departing Danang that night POWER returned to PIRAZ station on the following day as "SHOTGUN" for USS MAHAN (DLG 11). POWER was detached 18 November and proceeded to rendezvous that day with CTG 77.7 embarked USS CONSTELLATION (CVA 64) on YANKEE Station, where she acted as Rescue Destroyer.

On 26 November, POWER was detached to proceed independently to Sasebo, Japan but was forced to take shelter 28 November in Subic Bay due to rough weather and the threat of Typhoon ORA. The ship's company ate a late, but welcomed Thanksgiving Dinner that evening. By the next day weather had improved

sufficiently, and POWER was underway for Sasebo, Japan.

POWER arrived in Sasebo on 3 December for an eight day upkeep period. During this time, men of the POWER were offered the advantages of sightseeing and excellent liberty. POWER departed Japan 11 December in company with CTG 77.5, which consisted of USS HANCOCK (CVA 19) and USS SAMUEL N. MOORE (DD 747). While enroute Hong Kong for a port visit, POWER plane guarded for HANCOCK in Exercise "Blue Sky". POWER remained in British Crown Colony of Hong Kong from 14 December to 19 December. POWER departed Hong Kong on 20 December as TG 77.1 which consisted of USS HANCOCK (CVA 19), USS SAMUEL N. MOORE (DD 747), and USS DECATUR (DDG 31). POWER arrived on YANKEE Station 21 December. She was detached the next day to proceed to PIRAZ and relieve USS CORRY (DD 817) as PIRAZ "SHOTGUN".

USS POWER (DD 839) finished 1968 as PIRAZ "SHOTGUN" for USS WAINWRIGHT (DLG 28), spending Christmas Day 1968 and New Year's Eve at sea.

USS POWER (DD 839)

SPECIAL TOPICS

1. WEAPONS. In 1968, Weapons Department expended approximately 2500 rounds of 5"/38 ammunition (400 of which were fired while anchored off Vieques in February); seven torpedoes and four anti-submarine rockets. The Weapons Department earned an average grade of 111 (including bonus points) in anti-submarine warfare exercises for 1968. In late May, POWER's two dual-purpose twin 5"/38 mounts were regunned.

WEAPONS OFFICER:

LT PAUL P. AQUILINO

2. ENGINEERING. POWER's Engineering Plant, in 1968, carried her through months of exercises and the 1968 portion of her Vietnam Tour. Due to the efficiency of her plant, POWER met all operational commitments, steaming over 65,000 miles and burning more than 2,900,000 gallons of black oil.

ENGINEERING OFFICER:

LT JOSEPH A. FULMER

3. OPERATIONS. The Operations Department achieved grades of EXCELLENT or higher in all competitive exercises for 1968 with noteworthy 97.3 (OUTSTANDING) on a Tactical Maneuvering Exercise conducted while in transit to WESTPAC.

OPERATIONS OFFICER:

LT ANDREW J. COMBE

4. MEDICAL. HML James A. HEIST relieved HMC William R. DESSETTE as POWER's Hospital Corpsman prior to WESTPAC Deployment.

5. CHAPLAIN'S ACTIVITIES. Prior to deployment, LT GLENN, Destroyer Squadron FOURTEEN's Chaplain, assisted the ship by providing information concerning housing, personnel and religious activities to crewmembers' families. While underway, LT Peter MANNS, Squadron THIRTY-SIX's Chaplain rode the ship to WESTPAC providing religious services for the ship. In the Gulf of Tonkin, POWER enjoyed the services of various staff Chaplains.

6. REENLISTMENTS. There were four first term and four career reenlistments during 1968 resulting in an average reenlistment of 21.6 percent. Variable Reenlistment Bonuses paid during this year amounted to almost twenty-three thousand dollars.

7. BATTLE EFFICIENCY AWARD. For the second consecutive year, POWER won Destroyer Squadron FOURTEEN's Battle Efficiency "E" Award. The "E" is awarded each fiscal year for the Squadron ship attaining the highest overall score in competitive exercises. Concerning her second "E", POWER received the following from Rear Admiral WADLEIGH, COMCRUDESFLOT 12:

"The winning of the FY 68 Battle Efficiency Award by POWER in DESRON FOURTEEN is noted with real pride. The attainment of such an award is a result of excellent leadership, perseverance and hard work all which was ably carried out by POWER. Your demonstrated proficiency in fleet operations gives ample testimony for your claim to the award. Please accept my congratulations and a hardy Well Done".