

1972

~~SECRET~~
DECLASSIFIED

CV60:32:JBJ:mac

5750

Ser 516

16 MAR 1973

~~SECRET~~ - Unclassified upon removal of enclosures (9), (10) and (11)
NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

From: Commanding Officer, USS SARATOGA (CV-60)

To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: Command History; forwarding of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

- Encl:
- (1) USS SARATOGA Chronology 1972
 - (2) Narrative of USS SARATOGA Command History 1972
 - (3) Special Topics
 - (4) Complimentary Messages
 - (5) Commanding Officer's Biography
 - (6) Commanding Officer's Photograph
 - (7) Executive Officer's Biography
 - (8) Executive Officer's Photograph
 - (9) USS SARATOGA/CVW-3 Intelligence Report
 - (10) USS SARATOGA Cruise Report
 - (11) USS SARATOGA Communications Debrief

NOT
HELD

1972

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (11) are forwarded.

G. F. WILSTER
By direction

Copy to:
CNO (OP-09B9)

Reg 14 - 3505X

DECLASSIFIED
SECRET

USS SARATOGA (CV-60) CHRONOLOGY 1972

1 January Moored to pier C-1, United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida, in period of Restricted Availability (RAV).

20-21 January Fast Cruise.

24 January Underway from Mayport, Florida, for Sea Trials and Carrier Qualifications (CARQUALS) in the JAX Op Area.

29 January Moored to pier C-1, United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.

14 February Underway from Mayport, Florida, for Fleet Training in the JAX Op Area.

18 February Moored to pier C-1, United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.

22 February Underway from Mayport, Florida with embarked Attack Carrier Air Wing THREE (CVW-3) for Type Training #1 in the JAX Op Area.

28 February Moored to pier 12, United States Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia, for Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet change of command ceremony.

29 February Vice Admiral Frederick H. Michaelis, USN, relieved Vice Admiral Robert L. Townsend, USN, as Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet in ceremonies held on board USS SARATOGA (CV-60)

29 February Underway from Norfolk, Virginia enroute United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.

2 March Moored to pier C-1, United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.

7 March Underway from Mayport, Florida, with embarked Attack Carrier Air Wing THREE (CVW-3), for Type Training #2 in the JAX Op Area.

10-11 March SARATOGA/CVW-3 conducted a "Mini-National Week" in JAX Op Area as part of Type Training #2.

16 March Moored to pier C-1, United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.

17 March Dependents' Day Cruise & Firepower Demonstration by Attack Carrier Air Wing THREE (CVW-3).

Enclosure (1)

21 March	Underway from Mayport, Florida with embarked Attack Carrier Air Wing THREE (CVW-3) for type Training #3 in the JAX Op Area.
26 March	Anchored at Anchorage C off Mayport, Florida for purpose of embarking observers for SARATOGA's Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE).
27 March	Underway from Mayport Anchorage C for Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE) in the JAX Op Area.
27-29 March	Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE).
30 March	Moored to pier C-1, United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.
3 April	Underway from Mayport, Florida for Carrier Qualifications (CARQUALS).
3-7 April	CARQUALS for Atlantic Fleet Replacement Air Group.
7 April	Moored to pier C-1, United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.
8 April	Emergency recall of all officers and men for emergency deployment to SEVENTH Fleet in Southeast Asia.
10 April	Visited by Chief of Naval Operations.
11 April	Underway from United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida, enroute United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines (RPI) and SARATOGA's first WESTPAC deployment.
17 April	Transited across equator at longitude 34° 40'W enroute United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI, via Indian Ocean.
29 April	Chopped operational control to Commander SEVENTH Fleet.
5 May	Transited from the Indian Ocean through the Sunda Strait to the Java Sea enroute United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
8 May	Moored Leyete Pier, United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI, for on-loading of WESTPAC materials.
8 May	Visited by Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.
13 May	Enroute YANKEE Station.
18 May-21 June	Special Operations YANKEE Station (1st line period).

25 June	Typhoon evasion, underway for Subic Operating Area.
26-28 June	Inport United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
29-30 June	Enroute YANKEE Station.
1-16 July	Special Operations YANKEE Station (2nd line period).
17 July	Enroute United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
18 July	Underway from United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI, enroute Hong Kong.
20-27 July	Inport Hong Kong.
28 July	Enroute YANKEE Station.
28 July	Commence Special Operations YANKEE Station (3rd line period).
6 August	Embark fourteen United States Naval Academy Midshipmen for summer cruise.
10 August	Visited by Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.
16 August	Disembark fourteen United States Naval Academy Midshipmen upon completion of summer cruise.
22 August	Conclude Special Operations YANKEE Station (3rd line period).
23 August	Enroute United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
24 August	Commence inport period United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
26 August	Visited by Chief of Naval Operations and Commander SEVENTH Fleet.
1 September	Enroute YANKEE Station.
2 September	Commence Special Operations YANKEE Station (4th line period).
15 September	Visited by Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet for the presentation of the Admiral Flatley Memorial Award for aviation safety to USS SARATOGA (CV-60).
18 September	Visited by Commander in Chief Pacific, Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet and Commander SEVENTH Fleet.
18 September	Commander Carrier Division SEVEN shifted his Flag from USS SARATOGA (CV-60) to USS AMERICA (CVA-66).
19 September	Conclude Special Operations YANKEE Station (4th line period).

20 September	Enroute United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
21-27 September	Inport United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
28 September	Enroute YANKEE Station.
29 September- 21 October	Special Operations YANKEE Station (5th line period).
22 October	Enroute United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
23 October	Inport United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI. Commander Albert H. Hinman, USN, relieved Commander Clifford E. Thompson, USN, as Executive Officer, USS SARATOGA (CV-60).
24 October	Underway from United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI enroute Singapore.
27 October	Commence inport period Singapore.
29 October	Fire in Number Two Main Machinery Room was arrested without serious damage or impairment to the ship's operational capabilities. Three men lost due to smoke inhalation.
3 November	Underway from Singapore enroute YANKEE Station.
5 November- 8 November	Special Operations YANKEE Station (6th line period).
9 December	Enroute United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
10-16 December	Inport United States Naval Station, Subic Bay, RPI.
17 December	Enroute YANKEE Station.
18 December	Commence Special Operations YANKEE Station (7th line period).
23 December	Visited by Secretary of the Navy, Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet and Commander SEVENTH Fleet.
31 December	Special Operations YANKEE Station (7th line period).

NARRATIVE OF USS SARATOGA COMMAND HISTORY 1972

As SARATOGA ushered in the year 1972 tied alongside Pier C-1, United States Naval Station, Mayport, Florida, her officers and men were preparing her for a twelfth Mediterranean deployment. Preparations were being accomplished by the ship being placed in a restricted availability (RAV) status.

Chipped paint flew for weeks on end and the decks of SARA were bright with all the rust gone. She received a new coat of paint, and her crew began to prepare her for sea once again.

Two and one-half months is somewhat of a long time for seafaring men to be displaced from their habitat. Thus on 24 January 1972, SARATOGA cast off her lines and headed beyond the Atlantic's horizons as she commenced sea trials and carrier qualifications (CARQUALS) in the Jacksonville Operating area. During this five day deployment, all equipment and machinery which was revitalized during the RAV was examined and carefully scrutinized. Also, new equipment, much of it quite sophisticated in nature, was checked out.

During the RAV, the main engines' fuels systems were improved by changing to a new type of fuel called Navy Distillate. The new fuel burns easier with less smoke, thereby not only saving engineers many hours of work keeping their boiler plants cleaned out, but also aiding in keeping our atmosphere cleaner and healthier. This whole program, too, had to be examined.

SARA's initial sea period of 1972 also was used to orient and train the crew, both old and new and to refresh her air wing's pilots. A cohesive spirit and the ability to function as a team was constantly reiterated and was one of the primary goals of sea trials.

Five more "at sea" periods were scheduled, and the culmination of all the training was tested through the ship's Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE) during the latter part of March. The performance of the SARATOGA was graded "excellent" to "outstanding" by the group of embarked observers.

On 29 February, SARATOGA was honored to be at the Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia, acting as host ship for change of command ceremonies as Vice Admiral Frederick H. Michaelis relieved Vice Admiral Robert L. Townsend as Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

The date 17 March will undoubtedly be remembered by many families and friends of SARATOGA as the ship offered a Dependent's and Guest Day Cruise. During this day "at sea," the high performance aircraft of Carrier Air Wing THREE gave firepower demonstration which awed virtually everyone. The guests were treated with doughnuts, fried chicken "SARA style" and other refreshments. The amount of doughnuts consumed was phenomenal and many of the 8,000 visitors just did not want to depart the ship when she pulled back into Mayport later that day.

SARATOGA completed her last sea-trial/CARQUAL commitment on 7 April, returning to Mayport on that same day. Many of her officers and men then departed on leave, planning to spend a well-deserved rest with wives and families prior to SARA's departure to the Mediterranean on 1 May.

On the afternoon of 8 April, however, the ship was informed that its services were urgently needed in Southeast Asia. The situation there at the time necessitated additional Naval air power. SARATOGA, being the most available fully trained aircraft carrier, was directed to proceed to the Gulf of Tonkin in order to discourage North Vietnamese aggression and to hold the line, thus protecting U.S. lives in South Vietnam.

Sixty hours later, having taken on 2,500,000 pounds of supplies and the entire air wing, SARATOGA was underway. The pace of the "load-on" of supplies was feverish with an average of 41,666 pounds per hour being lifted aboard. The line of trailer trucks seemed endless. A gruelling task it was; time, of course, was vital. Moreover, all officers and crew members who had left on leave had to be re-called. Phone calls were made to all parts of the nation in this latter effort.

But on the early morning of 11 April, SARATOGA was ready -- combat ready -- to sail for her first combat assignment since commissioning in 1956.

On 18 April, one week after her departure from Mayport, SARATOGA crossed the equator at Longitude 34° 40' 00" West. At this time, the legendary King Neptune, Ruler of the Raging Main, came aboard to inspect the ship and crew. With only a few hundred Shellbacks (those who have crossed the Equator on a ship before), and over 4,000 Pollywogs (those who never have crossed before), a shocked (and very 'salty') King Neptune ordered an immediate initiation ceremony into the solemn mysteries of the ancient order of the deep. In a hilarious initiation, the Pollywogs were made trusty Shellbacks. Officer and enlisted Pollywogs alike went through the full gamut of initiation; SARA, a Pollywog herself, had her deck initiated with the sometimes messy excesses from the ceremony. The day was a relaxing break in the busy work of preparing for the tasks that laid ahead.

On SARA's way to the Western Pacific, she passed within a few miles of the famous volcano, Krakatoa, on 5 May. Still active, this powerful creation of nature on the southern edge of Sumatra could be seen during the night transit of the Sunda Straits. The fiery red glow of lava could be seen for miles as SARATOGA headed across the Sea of Java toward the South China Sea.

May 8th saw SARA steam into Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, for refueling, a replenishment of supplies and her first liberty in close to a month. Subic -- which became the ship's homeport away from home during her deployment -- served the crew well with the myriad of activities offered on the base and its magnificent Exchange facilities. Astounding as it may seem, SARATOGA personnel spent over \$1 million on stereo equipment alone during the deployment.

Refreshed, SARA pulled out of Subic on 13 May, headed for her first combat assignment. The line period, which lasted until 21 June, saw Air Wing THREE pilots expend over 3,500 tons of ordnance while flying nearly 2,000 combat strike sorties against enemy positions in both North and South Vietnam.

In missions over North Vietnam, the objectives were to prevent supplies from reaching South Vietnam, curtailing the Communist's vicious spring invasion of the South. Transportation facilities, supply depots and routes, staging areas and other military targets which were used to support North Vietnam's aggression were thus the main targets.

Operating off South Vietnam and flying missions in direct support of Republic of Vietnam forces, the offensive potential and punch of air power played a vital role in support of Allied ground troops in the South.

Regretfully, there were times of trial and tragedy as SARATOGA lost three pilots and four aircraft her first line period. One of the pilots was killed in the line of duty; two others were declared missing in action. There were tense moments as an RA-5C "Vigilante" pilot and RAN were rescued in enemy waters close to Haiphong Harbor after their aircraft was downed.

But there were also times of satisfaction. On 21 June, just prior to heading into port, two F-4J "Phantom" jets of Fighter Squadron 31, working with an air intercept controller on board the destroyer USS BIDDLE (DLG-34), another Atlantic Fleet unit, took on three MIG 21's high over North Vietnam. Dodging four enemy surface to air missiles, the Phantoms engaged the MIGs and in an elaborate supersonic dogfight, Commander Sam Flynn, Executive Officer of VF-31, shot a Sidewinder air to air missile which climbed up and exploded in the tail pipe of one of the MIG aircraft. The combined efforts of the BIDDLE and SARATOGA marked the first time a MIG was shot down exclusively by Atlantic Fleet units.

On 21 June, the SARATOGA completed her first period of combat operations -- 38 days in the Gulf of Tonkin which saw CVW-3 aircraft take part in strikes ranging from enemy troop concentrations in the lower panhandle of the Republic of Vietnam to petroleum storage areas located northeast of Hanoi. The operations were in continuing support of President Nixon's policy of supply route interdiction. Other aircraft launched from SARATOGA's 1,046 foot, four-acre flight deck struck enemy 37mm anti-aircraft guns and 150mm howitzers, pontoon bridges and major railway crossings, supply-laden sampans on inland waterways and infiltration barges running supplies down the coast under cover of shore batteries, trucks and tanks, mortar emplacements and bunkers, and complex coastal defense sites.

Aircraft flew night and day and crew members worked around the clock in support of CTF 77 efforts. Over 15,000 meals per day were prepared and hours-long ammunition on-loads kept working parties busy through the night.

On 23 June SARATOGA pulled into Subic Bay for some well-earned rest and relaxation.

Besides fighting a war, SARA was busy with her educational pursuits. Prior to her departure from Mayport, plans had been established to bring four professors from Jacksonville University to the Mediterranean for the Program for Afloat College Education (PACE). The sudden and unexpected change in deployment schedule almost disrupted the implementation of their program. However, immediately after departure, liaison was initiated with Jacksonville University and new plans formulated. Four professors met the ship in the Philippines and there were 208 enrollments in seven different courses. Personnel enrolled in PACE were considered students of Jacksonville University. All credits earned are now transferrable to a college or university. PACE thus enabled ambitious young men to pursue their education, bringing college right to their home to SARA. It is hoped PACE will become a permanent fixture on SARATOGA and all Naval units afloat.

SARATOGA got underway from her second line period off the coast of Vietnam on 29 June. Lasting until 16 July, Air Wing THREE pilots expended 1,240 tons of ordnance and flew 708 combat strike missions against the enemy.

This line period -- as each one was during the deployment -- marked by a high point of excitement. On 7 July, working swiftly with seconds remaining, SARA's flight deck team rigged the emergency arresting barrier net to snare a crippled A-6 "Intruder" jet making an emergency landing during operations in the Gulf. Launched only minutes before, the jet developed a fire in the starboard engine moments after launch.

On the flight deck, crewmen scrambled to complete the launch cycle then underway, clearing the deck. With time and fuel running out as the last plane was launched, crewmen ran from the forward catapults to the angle deck aft and hurriedly set up the barricade which is, in effect, an emergency net.

The A-6 was well into the final approach before the barricade was completed. Crewmen raised the net and scrambled for the safety of the catwalks as the crippled jet hit the deck, catching both the arresting wire and barricade, and hauling to a safe stop. Neither of the two crewmen were injured and the aircraft was not appreciably damaged.

10 July was a welcome day as crew members enjoyed what is termed a "standdown." On these days -- and each line period was marked by them -- no flight operations were scheduled and the cooks broke out the hotdogs, hamburgers and steaks for a barbeque on the flight deck. Time was also found for movies, sleep and letters to loved ones, as well as for friendly conversations with shipmates.

On 11 July, SARA and CVW-3 returned to a mission packed schedule. Regretfully, not all went well. On a mission 30 miles northeast of Hanoi, an F-4 "Phantom" was hit by enemy fire and went down. The pilot and radar intercept officer declared missing in action.

SARATOGA and CVW-3 closed out the week of July 10th with missions against enemy targets from Vinh to above Hanoi and Haiphong, periodically utilizing "smart" bombs.

On 19 July, after a one day stop at Subic Bay, SARATOGA got underway for a one week visit to Hong Kong, arriving in that exciting city on the morning of the 20th. Many SARATOGA wives and families flew to this Oriental city and with the arrival of each ferry from the ship, there were happy reunions.

"East is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall meet" -- except in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is a collage of life styles, people and nationalities. The ferry ride from the ship to Fleet Landing, past freighters, sampans, fishing junks and occasional hydrofoil, gave many sailors their first look at the kaleidoscopic face of the city. The islands that comprise Hong Kong are combinations of Chinese, British, and not infrequently, American culture; a short walk can transport one from one world to another.

Quite a few crew members took the ship's tours which were offered, visiting spots on Hong Kong Island from the New Territories to the Red Chinese border.

Although the men of SARATOGA saw many of Hong Kong's faces, there were an even larger number left to be seen. One could have spent a lifetime in Hong Kong and still not have seen it all, and although many would have liked to stay, the visit came to an end on the morning of 27 July as SARA got underway and headed for the Tonkin Gulf.

On 28 July SARATOGA and Carrier Air Wing THREE began their third line period off the coast of Vietnam with strikes both north and south of the DMZ. Enemy targets struck in that first week included bridges, petroleum products storage areas, waterborne logistics craft, the Haiphong Shipyard and surface to air missile sites.

On 6 August, Lieutenant Jim Lloyd, flying an A-7 "Corsair" on a routine bombing mission near Vinh, had his aircraft shot out from under him by a SAM. Successfully ejecting from the fatally-crippled jet, Lieutenant Lloyd landed and found himself deep in enemy territory, at night, with the voices of searching North Vietnamese ringing out all around him. Above him, circling CVW-3 jets joined search and rescue helicopters in a mounting effort.

At one point, two North Vietnamese actually found Lloyd, jabbing him in the back with the barrel of a rifle. The two apparently thought he was dead or unconscious, for they both ran away to inform others. At that point, Lieutenant Lloyd got up and ran, with automatic weapons fire flying over his head. A half-hour later, Lloyd was able to see the searching helos and as the 'bird' came in low and made an approach, he attempted to catch the rescue hook but missed. On the second pass, the helo landed approximately 100 feet away. Lieutenant Lloyd ran and dove in, amid enemy ground fire

and the answering eruptions of the helo's 60mm machinegun. A jet pilot who had been overhead during the rescue told the helo crew later that they had been taking anti-aircraft fire at point-blank range.

"It's just fantastic what so many people will do to save one life. I am so very impressed by the Navy's all for one, one for all effort," said Lieutenant Lloyd after being brought back to SARATOGA.

On the early evening of 10 August, Communist MIG aircraft were noted flying in the vicinity of Vinh. The enemy aircrafts' intentions unknown, the decision was made to launch the ship's combat air patrol (CAP) jet-fighter which was sitting on the catapult in a five minute alert status. The pilot, Lieutenant Commander S. B. Tucker and his radar intercept officer, Lieutenant Junior Grade R. E. Edens, Jr., quickly picked up the enemy MIG on their radar and began a tail chase. Closing to within four miles, Lieutenant Commander Tucker then fired two "Sparrow" missiles. A very short time later, two large explosions were noted. The downing of the Communist jet was a first because never before had a Navy jet "bagged" a MIG at night. Moreover, it was the first time ever a "Sparrow" missile was used successfully at night.

SARATOGA completed her third line period on 23 August, expending a total of 2,526 tons of ordnance while flying 1,373 combat missions over enemy positions.

The ship arrived in the Philippines on the 24th for a seven-day period of rest and relaxation. The Philippines, still in the process of recovering from flooding caused by three typhoons and the monsoon season, received a portion of the proceeds from SARA's August ship's raffle fund. The money was used to help support relief operations in the flood-ravaged central Luzon provinces.

While in port on the 26th of August, SARATOGA was honored to have Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr. come aboard for a visit. Admiral Zumwalt, who was on a visit of Seventh Fleet units in the Pacific, took time to speak to the crew and field questions from SARA sailors.

On 1 September SARATOGA once again got underway and headed for the Gulf of Tonkin. A quick transit was followed by two days of limited operations due to the proximity of Typhoon Elsie and poor weather conditions over Vietnam. On 4 September SARATOGA made an "end run" around Elsie back into the Gulf of Tonkin where on 5 September as weather improved, CVW-3 pilots resumed regular strike operations against targets in North Vietnam. During the next sixteen days of operations Carrier Air Wing THREE flew nearly 800 combat strike sorties including ALPHA strikes on Kien An Airfield, Ninh Binh, Bac Giang, Nam Dinh, Hon Gay and Phu Ly.

SARATOGA's type commander, Vice Admiral F. H. Michaelis, visited the ship on 14 and 15 September to present the ship the Admiral Flatley Memorial Award for aviation safety. The award is presented annually by the Chief of Naval Operations to the aircraft carrier which exhibits the highest standards of aviation safety. The award is based on total flight activity

during the year and contributions to safety by the ship and air wing. During the award year, SARATOGA and CVW-3 amassed over 26,000 launches and recoveries of aircraft.

On his visit, Vice Admiral Michaelis also presented medals and awards to 116 officers and men of SARATOGA and CVW-3.

Since her arrival in the Western Pacific, SARATOGA had acted as the flagship for the Commander, Carrier Division SEVEN, Rear Admiral Jack S. Christiansen. At 12:00 on 18 September, however, Admiral Christiansen shifted his flag from the SARATOGA to the USS AMERICA.

But no sooner had the Admiral and his staff disembarked when a distinguished group of visitors came aboard which included Admiral Noel A. Gayler, Commander in Chief, Pacific; Admiral Benard Clarey, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet; and Vice Admiral James L. Holloway III, Commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet. With them were Major General ^{Ray} Spanjer, USMC, and other staff members. In the Western Pacific for orientation and to confer with military commanders in the Seventh Fleet and in Southeast Asia, two of the guest took time to speak to the crew on SARATOGA's closed circuit television system. Admiral Clarey and Vice Admiral Holloway appeared with the ship's executive officer, Commander C. E. Thompson, discussing the current military situation and fielding questions.

SARATOGA completed line period four on 19 September, dropping 1,434 tons of ordnance and flying over 800 combat strike missions. On the evening of September 20th, the vessel steamed into Subic Bay.

After a week of relaxation, SARATOGA put the morning Philippine sun on her stern and headed for YANKEE Station, ready to commence line period five on 29 September.

Weather in the early fall is quite unpredictable over North Vietnam. Thus, aircraft were many times placed in a "hold" status -- yet ready to "go" at a moment's notice if the weather over a target suddenly cleared up.

SARATOGA's embarked helicopter squadron, Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron SEVEN (HS-7) rendered needed assistance to the heavy cruiser NEWPORT NEWS on 1 October following an explosion in an 8-inch gun turret. Both a doctor and a corpsman from SARATOGA were heloed over to the cruiser to augment the doctors and corpsmen in the tragedy-struck vessel.

During the first week's of October, SARATOGA fulfilled the six months' eligibility requirements for the Republic of Vietnam campaign medal, a ribbon and medal authorized by the government and people of South Vietnam recognizing U. S. military personnel who have served more than six months in Southeast Asia to preserve freedom.

20 October saw CVW-3 pilots working against enemy positions in the Pleiku area of South Vietnam. It was the biggest day from the point of view of ordnance delivered in that 155 tons of ordnance were dropped on targets in South Vietnam.

Friendly forces had been fighting in this area of the Central Highlands constantly since March. Attrition of both equipment and personnel had reduced their combat effectiveness. Though the 23rd ARVN Division had operational control of the area, they had been unable to get their troops into effective combat with the enemy.

Beginning on 17 October, a small task force of 250 tired Territorials, under Provincial command, were deployed in Phu Nhon District, Pleiku Province, to develop the enemy situation. During the course of the operation, they located, identified and fixed the 48th Regiment of the 320th North Vietnamese (NVA) Division. This not only enabled the 23rd ARVN Division to engage the enemy more effectively, but it upset the enemy time-table for a coordinated attack on the District Headquarters, forcing him (the enemy) to prematurely commit his forces piecemeal and to suffer defeat in detail.

On this operation, three U.S. military advisors were wounded, one helicopter pilot and a radio repairman were killed and another seriously wounded. The Vietnamese Brigade Commander and 14 RF soldiers were also killed.

At 0530 on the morning of 20 October, the friendly forces, depleted but with two new U.S. advisors in place, received a strong attack by the 48th NVA regiment at My Thach. They were under incessant fire for almost 10 hours, including 82mm mortars, 75mm recoilless rifles, B-40 and B-41 rockets, 51mm machine guns and AK-47 rifles.

The situation had become so desperate by 1015 that the Commanding General of II Corps declared a tactical emergency which qualified the province for tactical air support on a priority basis. It was at this time that jets from the aircraft carrier SARATOGA were requested to render aid.

In all, during the next six hours, 83 sorties were flown by CVW-3 aircraft. Following their attacks, ARVN troops were able to advance 1,400 yards and discovered 102 North Vietnamese soldiers dead. The friendly forces were able to capture 75mm recoilless rifles, 82mm mortars, many AK-47 rifles, B-40 and B-41 rocket launchers, scores of ammunition for all weapons, numerous torpedoes, a large assortment of communications equipment, binoculars, medicine and bandages and many other items of food and other supplies necessary for the enemy to mount a sustained attack. The enemy subsequently withdrew and during the night, ARVN troops received only harassing, light fire. Large elements of the 23rd ARVN Division were then inserted and immediate danger to the small provincial forces was much reduced.

Because of the support offered by SARATOGA and CVW-3, Captain Sanderson received a letter from Lamar M. Prossen, Province Senior Advisor. Prossen thanked SARA's skipper for the "sterling support" on the 20th. Prossen also sent SARATOGA a brass bell with the following inscription:

"To the brave pilots of the USS SARATOGA, in deepest and most sincere appreciation for their valiant support of the Territorial Forces of Pleiku Province, in their desperate defense of the village of My Thack 20 October 1972. The significant victory achieved against the 320th NVA Division is directly attributable to the precision and persistence of the pilots of SARATOGA. "Vietnam Cong Hoa Muon Nam" (long live Vietnam)

Prossen went on to state in the letter that the SARATOGA attacks saved the lives of more than 250 Vietnamese RF officers and men, as well as two American advisors.

On the evening of 22 October, SARATOGA again steamed into Subic Bay. The stay was relatively short as the ship departed the Philippines on the 24th for Singapore.

While in Subic on 23 October Commander Albert H. Hinman relieved Commander Clifford E. Thompson as Executive Officer.

In the morning hours of 27 October, SARA wended her way through the hundred or so ships in the roads at Singapore and dropped anchor. The crew realized that they were about to visit a truly international crossroads of the world; they were not disappointed. They found Singapore "instant Asia." All of the cultures and costumes, all the colors and creeds of the Far East were found in this diminutive island. It was particularly enjoyable because of the friendliness and the dominant English language. Nevertheless, a glorious conglomeration of exotic sights, sounds, and aromas left little doubt that Singapore was the personification of the mystic Orient and the place where East meets West. There was something for everyone in Singapore.

On Sunday, 29 October, the duty section got a chance to test their mettle and were equal to the challenge to the man. A valve let go which sprayed distillate fuel under pressure into a main machinery room. The inevitable fire resulted which required the quick response of all hands on board. The reaction was spontaneous. The fire was quickly controlled with minimum damage. This unfortunate event was not without its tragic aspect in that three persons lost their lives from acute smoke inhalation.

Through the efforts of all hands, SARA left Singapore on 3 November, as scheduled, to meet operational commitments required for line period number six which commenced on 5 November and ended on 8 December.

Thanksgiving 1972 was spent by SARATOGA on YANKEE Station. A bountiful feast was enjoyed by all, and the entire crew expressed their reverent thanks for the inevitability of the negotiations to reinstate peace in Southeast Asia.

SARATOGA was honored by a visit from Vice Admiral Cooper, the Task Force Commander on YANKEE Station, came aboard to make award presentations to 56 officers and men of SARATOGA and CVW-3.

After the ceremony, Vice Admiral Cooper spoke to the crew. The following is an excerpt from his remarks:

"You gentlemen are heroes. You're heroes to me, to Task Force 77, to the Navy and to the country. The fact that this war is approaching an end -- and a successful end as far as the United States is concerned -- has been brought about by you gentlemen here. You've done a great job."

SARATOGA sailed into Subic Bay on the evening of 9 December after completing one of her longest line periods. The week's stay at the base was enjoyed by all hands as crew members took advantage of the myriad of Christmas gift selections at the exchanges.

After the shopping was done, men had the opportunity to take tours to Coorregidor, Pagsanjan Falls, Manila and Baguio City.

Also while in Subic, the SARATOGA Welfare and Recreation Committee sponsored sports competition for all personnel. Skeet, golf, bowling, softball, basketball and a variety of other events were featured with trophies being awarded for winning individuals and teams in each event.

One of the most heart-warming days of the cruise was 15 December when the ship invited over 40 Filipino orphaned children to SARATOGA so that their Christmas could be a little brighter than it normally would be. Each child was presented with a gift, and, of course, Santa Claus was even able to make an appearance. From the smiles on their faces, those children will never forget their afternoon on SARATOGA. For many of those who took part in the festivity, it was difficult to say "good-bye" to these youngsters.

As things turned out, however, the "good-byes" were only temporary. Many individuals were so moved by these youngsters and their pathetic plight that a project was undertaken to initiate a fund for the orphanage -- the Olongapo Boys' Town and Girls' home. In a venture many individuals considered an impossibility, the crew of SARATOGA raised the unbelievable sum of \$25,000 in just five days!

Located just a few miles from the Naval Base in Subic, Boys' Town and Girls' Home was in desperate need of repair. Hot water was available to these children only one hour a day while electric power was a mere three-hour luxury. The aim of the project was to "prime the pump" for even a bigger fund with the hope the other ships in WESTPAC could follow through with the fund SARA's men and officers established and keep it growing. Not only will SARA's investment allow the orphanage to expand modestly, since it can now only accommodate 40 children, but it will give these youngsters things they could not even dream of before -- sanitary living conditions, medical assistance, a helping hand. Also, a building which presently stands at Boys' Town-Girls' Home will be refurbished (monsoon rains left deplorable conditions) and will be named SARATOGA/Carrier Air Wing THREE Hall in tribute to the men and officers who offered so much.

Line period seven which began on 18 December was a very hectic one as the Northeast Monsoon still posed problems. Rain and cloud cover over both the Gulf of Tonkin and North Vietnam made the schedule very volatile and frustrating.

On 19 December, the bombing restriction north of the 20th parallel was lifted and for over a week, jets from Air Wing THREE, the other carriers and from the Air Force combined to strike the military vitals of North Vietnam.

As Christmas approached, SARATOGA was visited on 23 December by three very distinguished guests while on YANKEE Station. Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable John W. Warner, the youngest man ever to hold the Navy's highest civilian position; Admiral Bernard Clarey, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet; and Vice Admiral James L. Holloway III, Commander of the Seventh Fleet, were able to share several hours of their very taxing schedule with SARA. These distinguished individuals visited every ship in the Gulf of Tonkin in a matter of just a few days so that they might express their Christmas wishes to the many officers and men who could not be home with their loved ones for the holidays.

Speaking to the entire crew over SARATOGA's closed circuit television system, the Honorable Mr. Warner said that peace is foremost in the mind of President Nixon. "You must realize that certain sacrifices, however, such as being away from home at Christmas time, are necessary in order to live in peace and happiness which we all are entitled to," said the Secretary.

Christmas day found many of SARATOGA's officers and men experiencing their first Christmas away from loved ones. The separation was a difficult one to accept.

The holiday mood was quite evident Christmas Eve, though, as a group of spirited carolers showered SARA with seasonal songs, and the traditional religious services were held. On the following day, every one feasted. The cooks really went all out as steak, lobster, ham, turkey and roast beef were all available. And what's Christmas without egg nog? That was available, too, not to mention the many selections of pies, fruit cake, nuts and candy.

The year 1972 was brought to a close on SARATOGA as the 1,046 foot-long aircraft carrier operated off the coast of North Vietnam.

During her eight months on station, her jets dropped more than 14,000 tons of ordnance on enemy positions while flying over 14,000 combat missions (both strike and support) over Southeast Asia.

The ship was expected to complete combat operations in the Western Pacific on 8 January 1973, returning then to Mayport, Florida, and an eventual 11-month yard overhaul in Portsmouth, Virginia.

SPECIAL TOPICS

A. PERSONNEL

The ship continued to have a very high turn-over rate for its personnel during 1972. From a crew of approximately 2,500 personnel there were 1,273 losses and 1,412 gains during the calendar year with an approximate turn-over rate of 51 per cent. In preparation of SARATOGA's emergency deployment on 11 April 1972 it was necessary to recall 450 personnel from leave status and process 250 personnel for separation and PCS transfers. The compliment onboard and the time of the emergency deployment was 2,474 (91 per cent) and later reached a SARATOGA peak of 2,749 on 10 December; the first time in recent years in which SARATOGA exceeded it's onboard allowance by one per cent.

B. NAVIGATION

January marked the end of a Restricted Availability Period and the start of a work-up for the Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE) in March. Returning to Mayport on 7 April, the Navigation Department had completed all preparations for a scheduled deployment to the SIXTH Fleet on 1 May; however, SARATOGA sailed on 11 April under emergency deployment conditions to the Western Pacific (WESTPAC). With the failure of the satellite navigation system and the unreliable hyperbolic signals in the area of the transit to WESTPAC, the "Gators" went to their sextants and SARATOGA arrived in Subic Bay, Philippines on 8 May. The end of the year saw SARATOGA involved in the seventh line period of combat operations with approximately 100,000 nautical miles of steaming under her keel.

C. DECK

Prior to the departure to WESTPAC on 11 April, Deck Department was engaged in a total of 13 rearming/refueling and underway replenishments (UNREPS). Included in this number was an underway refueling from the merchant ship, ERNA ELIZABETH, as part of an evaluation to determine the feasibility and problems related to at-sea refueling from U. S. merchant ships. During the WESTPAC deployment SARATOGA was engaged in 84 rearming/refueling UNREPS and 11 vertical replenishments (VERTREPS). The following statistics were achieved as a result of the 84 UNREPS; 13,996 lifts were transferred, 68,500 gallons of Aviation Gasoline, 40,160,925 gallons of Naval Distillate (ND) and 33,825,285 gallons of JP-5 for a total of 74,058,710 gallons, were pumped to SARATOGA. The 11 VERTREPS included 1,159 lifts of ammunition and 1,073 lifts of supplies.

D. AIR DEPARTMENT

During the calendar year 1972, the following statistics were achieved by the SARATOGA Air Department:

Total free deck launches - 3,082
Total catapult launches - 18,219
Total arrested landings - 19,862

Enclosure (3)

In addition, the following cumulative statistics have been achieved as of the indicated dates:

23 December 1972 - The arresting gear successfully trapped its 175,000th aircraft.

16 November 1972 - Catapult No. 1 successfully launched its 63,000th aircraft.

1 December 1972 - Catapult No. 2 successfully launched its 41,000th aircraft.

10 November 1972 - Catapult No. 3 successfully launched its 32,000th aircraft.

1 December 1972 - Catapult No. 4 successfully launched its 35,000th aircraft.

E. OPERATIONS

The 1972 WESTPAC deployment for USS SARATOGA (CV-60) and Carrier Air Wing THREE marked the first time that this East Coast ship and Air Wing had deployed together to engage enemy forces in Southeast Asia (SEA).

The transit to Western Pacific waters was highlighted by extensive ground training in preparation for combat operations. The Integrated Operational Intelligence Center's (IOIC) close circuit television system was utilized to present a variety of topics ranging from jungle survival, through area familiarization and tactics to the complexity of rules of engagement.

After smoothing the NTDS Atlantic Fleet Operational Program including several specialized modules for Mediterranean operations and the CV concept, several changes had to be implemented to make SARATOGA compatible with SEA operations. These changes included the implementation of the SEA modules, the reversion to the standard Link 14 module, and the incorporation of an automatically loaded map overlay of the Tonkin Gulf for NTDS display.

The Ship's Inertial Navigation System (SINS) provided accurate information throughout the year with only minor exceptions. During the crossing of the Indian Ocean in April, SINS was the only navigational aid in operation. Star fixes and sun lines were used for reset information. At the end of the 5,500 mile crossing, the SINS position accuracy was within seven miles!

The Tactical Satellite Communication System was installed during RAV-72 and it greatly increased the proficiency and reliability of communications. The Weather Satellite Tracking System (AN/SMQ-6) was installed by Ship Repair Facility (SRF) Subic in October and provided increased weather service capability by providing an exact pictorial diagram of the upper atmosphere. This information aided in the forecasting of weather around intended target areas.

During RAV-72, the IFF system was modernized with the installation of the MK XII IFF (AIMS). This system provided a secure IFF capability and

improved air traffic control through an improved display system and by reducing the number of erroneous returns.

1972 was a significant year for the AN/SPN-42 Automatic Carrier Landing System. 470 Mode 1, 288 Mode 1A, 2,457 Mode 2 and 1,710 Mode 3 landings were completed during the year; the most significant landing was accomplished on 24 November when SARATOGA recorded her 1,000th Mode 1 landing, a Navy first.

During the latter part of 1972, with the high level of combat operations in progress and the deteriorating weather conditions, SARATOGA was tasked with the exploitation of Air Force "Buffalo Hunter" (drone) photography. During this period IOIC produced approximately 650 select prints of high level interest targets in North Vietnam.

Air logistics in the Gulf of Tonkin continued to be very complex. To ensure that this area was adequately covered, the Air Traffic Officer (ATO) was expanded to include one officer and three petty officers. In addition, a twelve man "BRAVO" working party was available to the ATO through the post office for mail/cargo loading and unloading evolutions. The following is a summary of all mail, passengers and cargo transfers, total fixed wing and helicopter logistic sorties flown during the deployment:

Mail - 835,135 pounds
Passengers - 5,423
Cargo - 138,367 pounds
Sorties - 1,276

F. COMMUNICATIONS

During the 72-RAV a Tactical Satellite Communications System was installed in SARATOGA. Installation of this system significantly improved the communications readiness and reliability. In addition, to facilitate quality control of tactical UHF communications, a UHF transceiver (AN/URC-9) was installed in facilities control which greatly increased the expediency of trouble shooting and eliminating delays in circuit restoral.

During the transit to the Pacific, the Communications Department effected the installation of an improved receive multicoupler (AN/SRA-49) in facilities control, enhancing the reliability of high frequency communications. 100% reliability on all tactical HF and UHF circuits was maintained during the WESTPAC deployment.

SARATOGA was the first ship to make a transit to the Pacific utilizing both LES-6 (Atlantic Satellite) and TACSAT-1 (Pacific Satellite). This transit was accomplished in a total high frequency EMCON condition, requiring the use of newly installed satellite communications equipment. Despite being in an EMCON condition for an extended period of time, the ship received all incoming messages with a reliability in excess of 95%.

Traffic volume prior to SARATOGA's WESTPAC deployment averaged 648 messages per day received and 154 messages per day transmitted. Upon inchoption to SEVENTHFLT traffic volume was significantly increased to 1,241 per day received and 348 per day transmitted, reaching a peak of 2,100 messages worked per day in support of Air/Strike combat operations in the Gulf of Tonkin. In excess of 300,000 messages were handled resulting in over 15,000,000 sheets of paper to manually reproduce, collate and distribute. In addition, SARATOGA handled in excess of 17,000 visual tactical signals, giving the nickname of "Silent Sara" by some of the smaller ships in company. The Communications Department gave ARFCOS support to over 40 deployed units in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The department averaged approximately 85% of its personnel allowance throughout 1972. Also, approximately 80% of all personnel assigned were advanced at least one pay grade during 1972.

G. WEAPONS

Prior to the emergency deployment, Weapons Department personnel participated in a variety of endeavors varying from firing gun salutes at the NAVAIRLANT change of command ceremony to loading weapons for SARATOGA's Nuclear Training Proficiency Inspection (NTPI), however, the tempo of operations was to greatly increase upon arrival in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Due to the large amount of conventional ordnance required in combat operations, the 4 forward mess decks were used exclusively as bomb assembly areas. Bombs and weapons of all size and configuration were assembled under short notice to meet the changing daily requirements of the varying combat operations. Excessive failure rates of Sparrow III missiles were corrected with assistance from a Naval Missile Center representative from COMFAIRWESTPAC DET CUBI.

During the 175 days of combat operations weapons personnel "prepared" the following ordnance for the 7,484 combat sorties which were flown during the deployment:

MK-82	36,546
MK-83	3,793
MK-84	86
MK-36	2,982
MK-20	3,277
AGM-45	256
AGM-78	24
MK-82 LGB	26
MK-83 LGB	34
MK-84 LGB	32
SSQ-38	15
MK-1	65
MK-5	15

The above ordnance equated to a total of 13,525 tons of ordnance delivered on enemy forces in Southeast Asia.

H. MEDICAL

SARATOGA got underway from Mayport, Florida for an emergency deployment to WESTPAC with only 72 hours prior notice. During the 72 hour period, personnel were recalled from leave and as many medical supplies as could be obtained were brought on board. Unobtainable and additional supplies were ordered for delivery to the ship upon arrival in Subic Bay, Philippines. Out of 25,000 patients treated, only 27 patients were referred to either USNH Subic or Clark AFB for additional consultation. In addition, the Medical Department efficiently handled over 2,000 cases of venereal disease, with each case requiring review, treatment and follow-up.

The department aptly demonstrated its capability in handling mass casualties during the tragic fire in Number Two Main Machinery Room in October in which 3 persons died from smoke inhalation. All casualties were treated aboard SARATOGA by the medical department duty section and other medical personnel not on liberty in Singapore. No outside assistance was requested or required, and all casualties, with the exception of one patient with second-degree burns, were returned to duty in less than 48 hours.

I. DENTAL

Due to quick sail orders a massive effort was required in order to rapidly bring the stock level of dental supplies up to deployment level. Materials that were ordered for the expected Mediterranean deployment had not yet arrived. Instead of the normal 10L + 6 level of stock, the stock level was brought up to approximately on 18 month level of consumables, since WESTPAC deployments were known to be 10 - 12 months in duration. Due to failure of supplies to reach the ship, some items such as amalgam pellets, bracket table covers, cups, pin drills had to be obtained from the carrier screen.

Prior to deployment the x-ray machine burned out and a new one was flown to Mayport from Norfolk by AIRLANT and installed by the Mayport dental repairman approximately 12 hours before deployment.

During the transit to WESTPAC the Commanding Officer of the USS DETROIT (AOE-4) which accompanied SARATOGA asked for dental treatment for himself and his crew. A helo lift was established whereby 9 patients per day were brought over, held for 24 hours, heloed back and more brought back. These patients were mainly Class 3, 4 and 5. According to the Commanding Officer of the USS DETROIT, that was more dental work than his crew had received in the previous several months in Norfolk.

While deployed on the line, it soon became the pattern rather than the exception for patients from other ships all over the area of operations to be heloed in for dental treatments ranging from surgery to operative dentistry. Most of these patients were held for 24 hours before being

returned to their ships in order to accomplish maximum dentistry for them once they were aboard. Some of the patients required several days of post operative treatment before being returned to their ships.

The Dental Department experienced nearly an 80% turnover of personnel. While on the line the normal work hours were 14-16 hours daily, 7 days a week. The usual personnel replacement ordered to the ship had an astounding amount of needed dental work. Most were class 3, which puts a heavy requirement not only on the doctors, but also required man hours from the patient's normal place of duty.

From the time of the deployment in April until December 31st, Dental received 12,157 patients and performed 35,831 patient procedures. The requirement for operative dentistry was the number one problem, but the surgical load and need for prosthetics were very heavy. The preventive dentistry chair was run on a shift basis in order to try to hold appointment time at a minimum plus accomplish patient education, plaque control, stannous flouride treatments and periodontal evaluation.

J. ENGINEERING

On 1 January, SARATOGA B Division personnel were hard at work trying to meet light off schedules. Number Two Main Machinery Room was the first space to light off. This light off was a milestone in SARATOGA, in that she had been converted to burn Distillate Fuel.

At the conclusion of the RAV period in January the task was completed of converting the High Capacity Fog Foam (HCFF) stations 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 to light water system and R Division personnel commenced testing the system.

During the sea trials in January, the SARATOGA experienced the failure of 5 Navy Distillate Fuel Pumps. Repairs were promptly made to all damaged pumps, plus all pumps still in service were removed and double checked. The entire service system was flushed again and strainers were installed on the suction side of the pumps. As a result of this action, the SARATOGA witnessed only 1 pump failure during the second sea period from 14 - 19 February.

The department received an overall grade of 93% for the final ORE.

On 8 April, SARATOGA moored to the starboard side, pier C-1, U. S. Naval Station, Mayport, Florida and commenced the POM period. During the period 8 to 9 April, "B" Division commenced dismantling boilers for watersides and inspections. On 9 April, all hands were called back to prepare for "emergency extended deployment". All hands turned to around the clock until all was in readiness. All boilers, pumps and other equipment that had been dismantled was back in commission and ready for sea on 10 April. On 11 April, SARATOGA was underway for its emergency deployment to WESTPAC. On 14 April, Number 2 shaft experienced a thrust

block failure, but continuous hard work enabled the shaft to be placed back in commission on 16 April.

By May the department had qualified approximately 150 personnel to stand High Capacity Fog Foam (HCFF)/Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) watches.

Throughout the transit period, a rigid program of tank cleaning and service tank stripping was carried out in an effort to further reduce and prevent fuel oil service pump failures.

On 22 June the SARATOGA suffered its first ND fire. While making repairs to a section of Soot Blower piping using and acetylene torch a piece of hot metal fell into the bilge igniting a class "B" fire. The fire was promptly put out, but added emphasis was placed on firefighting.

On 29 October, as SARATOGA lay at anchor in Singapore, a fuel oil fire broke out in Number Two Main Machinery Room. The fire was caused by accumulation of ND. A failed part in the Fuel Oil Strainer was ascertained to be the cause of the fire. The crew waged battle against the smoke and flames for over two hours before finally extinguishing it. There was a good deal of bravery displayed by all hands, and four men of R Division were nominated for Navy Commendations. Two ALPHA Boiler was extensively damaged, and #7 Ship's Service Turbo-Generator (SSTG) and #2 Special Frequency Turbo-Generator (SFTG) were out of commission. A massive effort by all hands allowed the ship to leave Singapore on 3 November, with four shafts in commission and seven boilers ready for service to go back on the line. E Division personnel expended many long hours to put #7 SSTG and #2 SFTG into full operational condition. By the end of November both generators were operating under full load. By the end of the year approximately 75% of the repairs on 2A boiler had been completed.

Throughout the year SARATOGA has consistently met her operational commitments satisfactorily and in the process steamed approximately 100,000 nautical miles.

K. SUPPLY

January was the last of a three month RAV at the Naval Station Mayport, Florida. Requisitions were submitted for AVCAL outfitting in preparation for a May deployment. Rotatable pool and pre-expended bin item range and depth was revised and action taken to correct deficiencies.

During February, March and early April while the ship was involved in type training, Supply and Maintenance personnel were given a change to work out procedures for processing NORS/NFE/AWP and other type requisitions.

As a result of the ship being alerted on 8 April for emergency deployment within 72 hours, 7,000 requisitions covering a wide range of material were processed through NAS Jacksonville and NSC Norfolk for emergency issue. The entire shore establishment responded magnificently and hundred of tons of supplies were loaded prior to the departure on 11 April.

The 30 day transit to WESTPAC provided ample time to process all material receipts, purify records and train personnel regarding operations in the Pacific Fleet in a combat environment.

Departing from Subic Bay in mid-May, the SARATOGA commenced combat operations for the first time. After a few weeks of operations, it became evident that a new approach to supply support would be required. The Supply Support Center was processing in excess of 10,000 requisitions a month and 24 hour manning was a necessity.

Weapons Department took over the 4 forward Mess Decks for the building up of bombs. A 24 hour feeding concept was instituted and 4 completely different hot meals were served each day.

The first line period kept the ship at sea for approximately 42 days. Usage during the first line period exceeded that used on an entire Mediterranean cruise on many items. Parts shortages pushed the count of outstanding NORS/NFE/AWP requisitions higher and higher.

Obtaining ship's store stocks of foreign merchandise presented some problems. Flights to Ubon, Thailand were made in the ship's CIA and small quantities of jewelry, brass and related items were purchased. Limited quantities of stereo equipment were purchased from NEX Subic. Several buying trips were made to Hong Kong and squadrons VF-4 and VP-11 flew the material to Cubi Point.

Complete location audits of AVCAL storerooms were made in August. NORS/NFE/AWP management was made easier by an idea that was obtained from the USS KITTY HAWK (CVA-63). Daily mechanized listings were made and more frequent validations of priority 2 requisitions helped us to hold our own in this area. Supply assist messages helped to prevent major support problems.

On 1 September, Commander Cornelius relieved Commander Schanz as Supply Officer. Several of the junior officers were transferred or released from active duty and reliefs, fresh and eager, reported on board from NSCS Athens. New brooms began a clean sweep and several important changes in management and support concept took place. The most noticeable and appreciated change was the opening of Wardroom #1 twenty-four hours a day during at sea periods.