

USS THEODORE E. CHANDLER (DD-717)
FPO San Francisco, 96601

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From: Commanding Officer, USS THEODORE E. CHANDLER (DD-717)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09B9), Washington Navy
Yard, Washington, D. C. 20390

Subj: Command History Report (OPNAV Report 5750-1); submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Summary of Operations
(2) Congratulatory Messages

1. Enclosures (1) and (2) are submitted in accordance with
reference (a).



D. W. DELLINGER

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SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

The year 1973 was a diverse year for THEODORE E. CHANDLER; a year of drastic changes in mission and functions. The ship continued to meet all commitments punctually and capably, despite major reductions in personnel, and a mid-year homeport change. The assignments covered the gamut of destroyer operations, from plane guard and escort duties in the Southwest Pacific to public relations trips to Alaska.

THEODORE E. CHANDLER began the year, anticipating a rapidly approaching WESTPAC Deployment, as a member of Destroyer Squadron Nine, homeported in Long Beach, California. Other units of the squadron included: USS JOHN PAUL JONES (DDG-32); USS HIGBEE (DD-806); USS RAMSEY (DEG-2); USS FRANCIS HAMMOND (DE-1067); USS COOK (DE-1083); USS EDSON (DD-946); and USS TURNER JOY (DD-951). The ship began the year as a member of the First Fleet.

Having gone through the extensive and challenging refresher training satisfactorily, THEODORE E. CHANDLER was more than ready when 3 January and departure time for WESTPAC deployment arrived. A week at sea was followed by a week of briefings and repair in Pearl Harbor. On 16 January the ship commenced the two-week transit to Subic Bay, Philippines. OOD and tactical drills were held during this period. A week of upkeep and a softball tournament in Subic Bay preceded the short trip to Sasebo, Japan. The ship was transferred to the Seventh Fleet for the remainder of the deployment. The last half of February saw the ship underway, planeguarding for USS RANGER (CVA-61), USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65), and conducting four underway replenishments. This at-sea period also saw the first of over 140 helo details to come during the deployment.

The first week in March was spent in Kaohsiung, Taiwan in a period of upkeep and rest and relaxation that would serve the crew well in the busy month that was to follow. On 11 March THEODORE E. CHANDLER rendezvoused with USS CONSTELLATION (CVA-64) for several days planeguard duty. The seemingly endless string of VERTREPS and HIFR details which occupied the last half of the month were interrupted only by the visit of Rear Admiral Mark Woods, Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet on 15 March. The ship set sail for Subic Bay on 22 March, only to have that transit interrupted on the 23rd by an order to reverse course and steam at 26 knots to Yankee Station where she stayed on station with several support ships for a week. Subic Bay was not finally sighted until 2 April. The crew sampled the excellent hospitality of the Republic of the Philippines for the next two weeks and departed for Hong Kong the 13th of April, arriving on the 14th.

Enclosure (1)

The week in Hong Kong was the most enjoyable and memorable segment of the entire deployment for the crew since many of the wives had flown over to meet the ship there. Sad, yet fond, farewells were said to Hong Kong on 21 April as the ship departed for a 35-day at sea period off the coast of North Vietnam. This period was occupied with gunnery exercises, PIRAZ operations and tactical maneuvering drills, as well as the now-familiar UNREPS, VERTREPS, and HIFR details conducted in company with ships of CTU 77.0.2 which included USS HORNE (DLG-34), USS FOX (DLG-33), and USS STERETT (DLG-31). THEODORE E. CHANDLER received many "BZ's" during this period for her excellent performance and skill during the intensive period of operations.

After an exhausting month at sea the ship headed for an "R-and-R" period in the familiar and well-loved Philippines. After two weeks, many successful softball games, and several good parties with the British guests from HMS ANTRIM, THEODORE E. CHANDLER struck out for Yokosuka, Japan for a brief stop before heading for home. The latter half of June and the first three days of July were occupied with the uneventful transit to Long Beach with brief stops at Midway Island and Pearl Harbor along the way. On July 3rd THEODORE E. CHANDLER returned to her homeport of Long Beach to the cheers of loved ones waiting on the pier. The remainder of July and the first half of August saw the ship in an upkeep and leave period, preparing for a transfer to the Naval Reserve Force. As of the disestablishment of the First and Seventh Fleets, the THEODORE E. CHANDLER became a unit of the U. S. Third Fleet.

The last two weeks of August saw a myriad of operations: plane guarding for USS KITTY HAWK (CVA-63); many helo details and UNREPS; and, a public affairs visit to Astoria, Oregon, and their "Fish Festival" on the Columbia River. After much rain and many salmon, the ship returned to Long Beach for a week in port before another week in the Southern California operation areas as plane guard for USS ORISKANY (CVA-34). During this at sea period the ship received a new Executive Officer when LCDR Peter W. SOVEREL relieved LCDR Frank L. KERR on 9 September. 16 September was spent in Long Beach and on the 17th the ship was underway in the Southern California operation areas once again for submarine services with USS HARDER (SS-568) for three days. The last week and a half of September was reserved for tender availability in Long Beach as the crew prepared their families and the ship for an upcoming homeport change to Seattle, Washington, and transfer to the Naval Reserve Force.

On 1 October THEODORE E. CHANDLER said "farewell" to Long Beach and got underway for Seattle, Washington, and the Pacific Northwest. The ship transferred to Destroyer Squadron 37, which is commanded by Captain Arthur CODAY and is comprised of this ship, USS EPPERSON (DD-719), USS ROGERS (DD-876), USS OZBOURN (DD-846), USS ORLECK (DD-886), USS HAMNER (DD-718), USS CARPENTER (DD-825), and USS WILTSIE (DD-716). THEODORE E. CHANDLER relieved

USS EVANS (DE-1023) which was decommissioned a month later. The ship is under the administrative command of the Chief of Naval Reserves, headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana. Although still fulfilling a full operational schedule, the ship's primary mission was altered to include the training of a selected reservist crew. The first two weeks in October were occupied with cross-decking of the crews between USS EVANS and THEODORE E. CHANDLER, indoctrination into the reserve program, and becoming familiar with the selected reservist officers and crew.

On 13 October THEODORE E. CHANDLER was ordered to fulfill a public affairs mission in Ketchikan, Alaska; to present to the high school students of the area the Navy, in the perspective of the many types of careers offered. Over 100 students spent a day touring the ship and participating in a brief cruise. Numerous commendatory messages were received as a result of the outstanding conduct of the crew in presenting the Navy and the ship in a very favorable light. (See enclosure (2)). These public relations operations fit in very well with the special celebration of the Navy Birthday during the week of 13-20 October. After five days in Ketchikan the ship departed for Port Alberni, British Columbia, to attend the traditional Trafalgar Day Ball in commemoration of Lord Nelson's victory in the Battle of Trafalgar. The ship was hosted by the Port Alberni Navy League and the crew attended several scheduled parties and activities. Once again, public relations were excellent and over 1,000 Canadians were given tours of the ship during the three days in port. On 23 October THEODORE E. CHANDLER returned to her new homeport of Seattle.

After three weeks of upkeep the ship participated in her first SELRES weekend cruise. On 17-18 November approximately 40 reservists embarked for a weekend of type training in Puget Sound: this cruise established the format of reserve weekends to follow. On December 3rd the number of personnel on THEODORE E. CHANDLER was reduced from 246 to 176 in keeping with Reserve Force allowances. The crew was faced with the new challenge of fulfilling normal operational commitments with reduced numbers. The reserve weekend of 8-9 December was followed by three weeks of upkeep in Seattle, as much of the crew departed on well-earned Christmas leave.