

U. S. S. GRIDLEY (DLG-21)

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From: Commanding Officer, USS GRIDLEY (DLG-21)

To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Command History for 1967; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

Encl: (1) Brief Chronology of Outstanding Events

(2) Basic Narrative

(3) Documentary Annexes

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


W. E. HARPER, JR.

BASIC NARRATIVE ADDENDUM

On November 18th, GRIDLEY departed Long Beach for her fourth tour of duty with the U.S. Seventh Fleet. In company with USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)-65), USS BATHWEDGE (DLG-25), USS TURNER JOY (DD-951), USS MCKEAN (DD-784) and USS MANTOX (DD-731), she sailed to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii where three days were spent taking on provisions, attending briefings and visiting the island of Oahu. From Pearl Harbor, GRIDLEY steamed westward to the Philippines. There she took on stores prior to departing for the Gulf of Tonkin and assuming carrier escort duties with USS ENTERPRISE for a two week period immediately preceeding Christmas.

GRIDLEY returned to Subic Bay, Philippines for Christmas and New Year's Day and then once again sailed to the Gulf of Tonkin to relieve USS RICHMOND K. TURNER (DLG-20) and to assume duties as Southern Element Search and Rescue Commander. On January 5th, 1967, the first day on search and rescue duty, GRIDLEY's helo was called to rescue a downed pilot off the coast of Vietnam. The helicopter, piloted by Lieutenant Commander Joseph Brecka and co-piloted by Ensign John McMinn attempted a daring rescue that drew fire from hostile batteries along the shore. In the action that ensued, LCDR Brecka was injured and one of his crewmen, ATN3 William Joseph Duggan suffered wounds which were to prove fatal. The helicopter managed to make it safely back to the ship where all medical aid available on board was administered. Despite all the efforts of GRIDLEY's doctor and medical personnel ATN3 Duggan died on board of wounds received in action.

The next 35 days were spent on SAR station. During this period, GRIDLEY participated in several SAR efforts. On February 8th, she was relieved and proceeded directly to Subic Bay for routine repairs and upkeep. By March 9th, GRIDLEY was back on SAR station for another tour -- this time for 32 days.

Her second tour was highlighted by no major SAR incidents and on April 9th, GRIDLEY was relieved to proceed to Hong Kong for five days of rest and relaxation.

Prior to visiting Hong Kong, GRIDLEY received notice that she had once again been scheduled to participate in the celebration commemorating the anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea and would visit both Australia and New Zealand prior to returning to the United States. From Hong Kong, she returned to Subic Bay for four days of logistics preparations and then, on April 23rd, departed for the land "down under!"

In company with USS MADDOX (DD-731), she steamed southwards, crossed the equator, initiated her Pollywogs into the "Ancient Order of the Deep" and arrived in Adelaide, Australia where the principal Coral Sea Celebration ceremonies took place on May 9th.

On May 11th, GRIDLEY departed Adelaide and proceeded on to Lyttleton and Wellington, New Zealand. Among the many visitors aboard GRIDLEY while in New Zealand were the American Ambassador to New Zealand, John P. Henning, the Mayor of Wellington, Sir Francis Kitts and the President of the New Zealand-American Association, Sir Arthur Tyndall.

GRIDLEY departed Wellington on May 22nd enroute to Long Beach for post-deployment leave and upkeep. After stopping in Pago Pago, American Samoa on May 26th, GRIDLEY arrived in Pearl Harbor on June 1st. There she spent one night before continuing on the last leg of her journey. Finally, on June 5th, after firing two exercise missiles on the Pacific Missile Range on June 7th, and after steaming over 47,000 miles since her departure, GRIDLEY returned to her home port and to the welcome of families and friends waiting on the pier. The ship immediately began a month-long period of leave and upkeep.

On June 26th, GRIDLEY entered the Long Beach Naval Shipyard for a restricted availability during which, work was accomplished on the fire control systems and the engineering plant.

In the middle of August, GRIDLEY and her crew were hosts to the Canadian Frigate HMCS Qu'Appelle which was visiting Long Beach after operations off the coast of Mexico. On August 31st, the Hathaway Home for Children, located in Los Angeles, paid a visit to the ship. The children were taken on a tour of the ship and served lunch on the Mess Decks.

In the middle of September, GRIDLEY left the shipyard to once again assume an operational status with the U.S. First Fleet. On September 25th, she sailed from Long Beach for the northern coast of California to assume plane guard duties with USS RANGER (CVA-61). Engineering problems necessitated an early return to Long Beach and she was relieved by USS STERRETT (DD-311), returning to port on September 29th.

Following a brief return to the yards for a series of tests on propulsion machinery, GRIDLEY stood out of Long Beach harbor on October 11th, to commence participation in First Fleet Exercise "Moon Festival". Her performance was judged in the post-exercise reports to be outstanding in most areas and was highlighted by a successful surface-to-surface missile shot for the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference in USS RANGER.

November 28th, 1967 again found GRIDLEY at sea -- this time taking part in First Fleet Exercise "Blue Lotus". Again, the ship practiced nearly every evolution which she was capable of performing in order to ready herself for distant duty deployment scheduled to start in February. Returning to Long Beach on December 3rd, GRIDLEY moored a few yards from the Queen Mary at Pier Echo and there she remained through the Christmas leave period.

GILLIS had received notice that she would depart for her fourth tour of distant duty deployment in February and the New Year brought with it not only the end of the holiday season, but also the many necessary inspections and preparations prior to departure.

CHRONOLOGY OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS

- (1) 5 January - 6 February 1967
9 March - 9 April 1967: GRIDLEY was engaged in Search and Rescue Operations in the Gulf of Tonkin as Southern Element Search and Rescue Commander.
- (2) 13 April - 16 April 1967: GRIDLEY made Port of Call in Hong Kong.
- (3) 8 May - 11 May 1967: GRIDLEY arrived in Adelaide, Australia to participate in the 25th Anniversary of the Celebration of the Battle of the Coral Sea.
- (4) 15 May - 17 May 1967: GRIDLEY visited Lyttleton, New Zealand
- (5) 18 May - 21 May 1967: GRIDLEY visited Wellington, New Zealand.
- (6) 7 June 1967 GRIDLEY fired two surface-to-air missiles on the Pacific Missile Range.
- (7) 8 June 1967: GRIDLEY arrived in her home port of Long Beach, California and commenced a month-long period of leave and upkeep.
- (8) 13 July 1967: GRIDLEY entered the Long Beach Naval Shipyard for a three month period of Restricted Availability.
- (9) 12 August 1967: The Hathaway Home, a Los Angeles home for disturbed children, visited GRIDLEY.
- (10) 31 August 1967: GRIDLEY hosted the Canadian Frigate HMS QU'APPELLE for a three day port visit to Long Beach.
- (11) 9 October 1967: GRIDLEY commenced participation in First Fleet Exercise "Moon Festival". The exercise ended 17 October.
- (12) 10 October 1967: GRIDLEY fired a surface-to-surface missile shot at a stationary target ship.
- (13) 14 October 1967: GRIDLEY fired a demonstration surface-to-surface missile shot for the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference in USS HANGER (CVA-61). She also fired on surface-to-air shot for exercise "Moon Festival".
- (14) 28 November 1967: GRIDLEY commenced participation in First Fleet exercise "Blue Lotus". The exercise ended 3 December.
- (15) 30 November 1967: GRIDLEY fired one surface-to-air missile on the Pacific Missile Range in conjunction with exercise "Blue Lotus".
- (16) 3 December 1967: GRIDLEY commenced Christmas Holiday leave period.