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U.S.S. KING (DLG-10)

FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96601

TO:

DLG10:RWH:dsn

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MAY 25 1967

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From: Commanding Officer, USS KING (DLG-10)

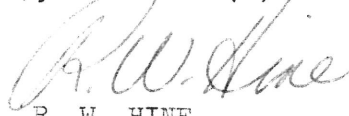
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B9)

Subj: Command History

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

Encl: (1) Command History of USS KING (DLG-10) for Calendar Year 1966

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded herewith.



R. W. HINE

By direction

Copy to:

CINCPACFLT

COMCRUDESPAC

COMDESRON FIFTEEN

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1. CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

1 -16 JAN	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
17-21 JAN	COMPOSIT UNIT TRAINING EXERCISE (COMTUEX 2-66)
14-18 FEB	(COMTUEX 4-66) MISSILE SHOOT
12-22 APR	FIRST FLEET EXERCISE "OPERATION GREY GHOST"
26 MAY	DEPLOYED TO WESTERN PACIFIC-DEPARTED SAN DIEGO, CALIF.
31 MAY	ARRIVED PEARL HARBOR
1 - 6 JUN	COMPTUEX 17-66, ORI, INPORT PEARL HARBOR
6 JUN	DESTROYED LAST REGULUS MISSILE
6 -14 JUN	ENROUTE YOKOSUKA, JAPAN
14-16 JUN	INPORT YOKOSUKA, JAPAN
17-21 JUN	ENROUTE SUBIC BAY, PHILIPPINES AND OKINAWA FOR MISSILE SHOOT
22-26 JUN	OPERATIONS FROM SUBIC BAY
27-28 JUN	ENROUTE DANANG, SOUTH VIETNAM
29-30 JUN	SEARCH AND RESCUE TRAINING
1 - JUL	RELIEVED TU 77.0.1 IN GULF OF TONKIN
	PT BOAT ATTACK BY NORTH VIETNAM
1 -29 JUL	TU 77.0.1 DUTIES
12 AUG - 7 SEP	PIRAZ DUTIES
13-16 SEP	INPORT HONGKONG (TYPHOON EVASION)
19-25 SEP	INPORT KAOSHIUNG, FORMOSA
27-28 SEP	OPERATION SILVER SKATE
29 SEP - 25 OCT	PIRAZ DUTIES
8 -10 NOV	INPORT CEBU, PHILIPPINES
13-29 NOV	PIRAZ DUTIES
3 DEC	CHANGE OF COMMAND, YOKOSUKA, JAPAN
20 DEC	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

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2. BASIC NARRATIVE

The year of 1966 saw the USS KING (DLG-10) engaged in several new tactical and operational activities. She also served as the flagship for the Commander of Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN at various times during the year. The KING is a member of Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla SEVEN and the Cruiser-Destroyer Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet. Overall operations command was through the Commander of the FIRST Fleet while in EASTPAC and the SEVENTH Fleet Commander during the WESTPAC deployment. CDR Charles P. TESH served as the Commanding Officer of the KING for most of 1966. He was relieved by CDR William L. READ on 3 December 1966.

The KING's primary mission is Anti-Air Warfare through her formidable Terrier Missiles. The KING's ASW armament is bolstered by her ASROC system and surface launched MK 44 torpedoes. The ship's armament is rounded out by the conventional 5"/54 and two twin 3"/50 guns. In addition to these basic functions, while deployed in WESTPAC the KING also carried a UH-2 Helicopter which enabled her to act as a search and rescue ship in the Gulf of Tonkin. The KING also acted as the Positive Identification and Radar Advisory Zone ship which involved a new concept in air surveillance. Both of these activities were new to the KING.

OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Having recently returned from a WESTPAC deployment, the beginning of 1966, January 1-16, was spent as an upkeep period in San Diego. During this time many of the complement of 26 Officers and 375 enlisted men enjoyed leave periods. On the 17th of January, the KING returned to sea to participate in COMPTULX 2-66. This was the beginning of the training period that preceded the KING's vital WESTPAC deployment later in the year.

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Exercises were conducted in AAW, ASW, Engineering, and Gunnery, as well as various other drills. Highlighting these exercises were the successful ASROC firing and the surface-launched torpedo.

At the close of these exercises KING returned to port on 22 January and remained in San Diego through 6 February. On the 7th, KING again headed out to sea for type training until 12 February, when she visited San Francisco for a weekend of rest and recreation.

From 14 to 18 February KING participated in COMPTUEX 4A-66, highlighted by a visit to the Pacific Missile Range on 15 February. Three RIM-2B Terrier missiles were fired at an unaugmented BQM-34A drone. Two of the three firings were successful kills, while the third was evaluated as a missile failure. The enclosed Quarterly Narrative for the 3rd quarter of 1966, specifies the reasons for this failure. Again, exercises in AAW, ASW, and Gunnery were the center of emphasis. KING returned to home port on 19 February, and except for two brief local operations, time was spent in preparing for the week of March 7 when the annual Administrative Inspection, Pre-deployment Inspection, annual supply inspection, and annual medical inspections were given. The remainder of the month spent in training for "Grey Ghost" exercise was particularly beneficial in preparing KING for her deployment in May. KING served as both a Tomcat and a Search and Rescue ship, while the proper operation of her Naval Tactical Data System was given a great deal of emphasis.

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KING's contribution was acknowledged by her receipt of the NTDS Cup signifying that she was the best operational NTDS ship in the exercise. Also significant in the KING's operation was the first firing of two Terrier Missiles in salvo which resulted in the destruction of an AQM-26A drone. A complete and detailed summary of "Grey Ghost" may be found in Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla NINE final report of exercise "Grey Ghost", serial 008, of 21 May 1966.

The second of May found KING off-loading all ammunition at Seal Beach before a short overhaul period at Long Beach Naval Shipyard. Here KING was out-fitted with a helicopter landing platform on her fantail. This platform played an important role in search and rescue missions associated with U. S. Air strikes against North Vietnam. Installation of the platform included a JP-5 refueling system which provided KING with the ability to refuel helicopters both on deck and while air-borne.

On 26 May, the KING departed San Diego in company with the USS ORISKANY (CVA-34) and other destroyers for Pearl Harbor, arriving there on 1 June. From 1-5 June, KING conducted daily operations, including the competitive Operational Readiness Inspection and ASW exercises. Another successful ASROC firing was also made during this period. While in port, the crew participated in a tour of the island and enjoyed the Hawaiian beaches.

KING departed Pearl Harbor on 6 June for Japan, when she arrived in Yokosuka on 14 JUN 1966.

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From YOKOSUKA, the ship sailed to the Okinawa Missile Range and conducted a missile exercise which was evaluated as unsuccessful since the missile did not acquire the target. On 22 June the ship entered Subic Bay, Philippine Islands and resumed its previous role of flag ship for Commander Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN. Leaving Subic on 24 June, the KING arrived at Danang Harbor, South Vietnam three days later, where Search and Rescue training was conducted for 4 days. This training was done mostly at night and included operations with friendly PTF and Swift Boats. Many night illumination exercises involving aircraft were conducted. This training was to reap dividends sooner than anyone expected.

KING reached her assigned station, about 30 miles southeast of the North Vietnamese port of Haiphong, on the morning of 1 July. Here she was to relieve a sister ship of KING, the COONTZ (DLG-9). For the relieving process, Captain TESH, with various other officers, went aboard COONTZ via KING's boats. An intelligence briefing was given and officers and men from the KING observed the COONTZ's performance during a series of air strikes conducted by planes from U. S. attack carriers located about 50 miles south of this Northern SAR station. During these strikes, a pilot was reported shot down near the coast, and the COONTZ and ROGERS started toward the scene. KING, along with the USS GURKE, closed the COONTZ to assist. It was at this time that ROGERS reported three high speed surface contacts closing the four destroyers. After being notified, COMDESRON SEVEN, who was OTC, in COONTZ, requested aircraft assistance from Yankee Team carriers to the south. Rapidly responding to the call, F-4 Phantoms and A-4 Skyhawks closed the scene and quickly sank two of the boats with bombs. The third remained dead in the water with most of its stern blown off.

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Upon completion of the air strikes COONTZ closed this craft to pick up survivors. On her way she sighted survivors from another of the torpedo boats and sent a message to KING directing her to pick them up. A total of nineteen prisoners were taken. Many had to be subdued before they could be brought aboard the motor whale boats sent out by KING and COONTZ to rescue them.

During the entire episode, many of KING's officers, including Captain TESH, remained aboard COONTZ. The KING, now under the temporary command of the Executive Officer, CDR Lawrence LAYMAN, was able to perform her duties smartly, a tribute to the high level of training and readiness achieved. Seaman HAITH and Petty Officer GARY received the Navy Commendation Medal for their heroism in subduing North Vietnamese sailors in the water during this action.

The remainder of July was spent on Northern SAR station, where KING assisted in the rescue of five downed aviators including one daring helo rescue from deep within North Vietnam. Helicopter operations played an important role in KING actions, with nearly daily delivery of mail and personnel and frequent in-flight refuelings that kept the flight deck crew busy from 0530 to 1900. After a month at the Northern SAR Station, KING went to Subic Bay for an upkeep period, which was to be followed by a scheduled visit to Hong Kong for rest and recreation. However, a new air surveillance concept requiring an NTDS equipped ship was created and KING's recreation was delayed. A PIRAZ (Positive Identification and Radar Advisory Zone) station in the Gulf of Tonkin was created and KING went back to sea. On 12 August, KING relieved the USS CHICAGO on station.

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KING's main function was protecting the force by maintaining positive identification of all aircraft in the PIRAZ zone. On many days, with Air Force, Navy and Marine Aircraft in the air, KING checked in over 250 aircraft, and by the time her tour was over she had checked over 15,000 aircraft flying combat missions over North Vietnam. KING's air controllers were constantly in control of combat air patrol aircraft, whose job it was to protect the Yankee Team carriers.

On the first night on the new PIRAZ station, strike followers picked up an Air Force F4C Phantom that had been hit by ground fire and was losing fuel. KING's controllers vectored the jet to a tanker, but inches from hook up to refuel the jet flamed out. In an exciting night rescue, KING's UH-2 helo rescued the pilot and radar control officer in pitch darkness. These two Air Force officers were the first of seven pilots to enjoy the KING's showers, rapid laundry service, and good food. For KING's ability to respond to emergencies, her alertness and professionalism, she received a total of 34 "Well Done's" from senior commanders in the force. The UH-2 helo became known as the "Fastest helo in the Gulf". From the time it was discovered that a pilot was in trouble, it took less than two minutes to have the KING's helo detachment on the scene.

The KING finally received her recreational trip to Hong Kong, arriving on 12 September. Here shopping and touring kept the crew busy. A day and a half of valuable liberty was lost when the ship had to leave port for typhoon evasion.

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The typhoon missed Hong Kong and KING re-entered port and remained another day after which she left for KAOHSIUNG on the island of Formosa for a 7 day tender availability. While there, several KINGSMEN visited polio clinics and orphanages to distribute Operation Handclasp toys and games. By the 30th of September, KING was back on PIRAZ station.

During this at-sea period, which was to last through 25 October, the KING and her helo detachment rescued two more downed Navy pilots. On October 9, an incident occurred which gained acclaim for KING from throughout the Navy. While following a morning strike in over North Vietnam, KING's alert air controllers picked up radar video from the vicinity of Hanoi. Knowing where each Navy aircraft was, KING was able to identify the contact first as an unknown and then as a hostile aircraft. Upon noting that hostile aircraft were closing friendly forces, KING relayed the information directly to own support aircraft. Having been alerted, the carrier pilots were able to shoot down two with a possible damage to a third of the closing MIG 21's. No U. S. planes were damaged due to the alert warning provided by the CIC team of the PIRAZ Ship which kept in contact. Messages from high-ranking seniors applauded the KING for another fine performance.

Relieved from her duties on the 25th, the KING traveled to the Philippines second largest port, Cebu. A fine town for rest and relaxation, Cebu was a bright spot for the crew. While there, KING's men helped paint a hospital and played the local teams in basketball and baseball. A musical group even played on television and entertained the towns people each evening from the top of the missile house. It was a very fine visit, and one in which a great deal of good-will between countries was developed.

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Following Cebu there was one last trip to PIRAZ Station, where one more pilot was rescued. Finally, on 29 November, the KING was relieved by USS LONG BEACH (CGN-9). KING had operated port and starboard with the CHICAGO, another cruiser, and had performed her task well. Many innovations and evaluations of requirements were contributed to the PIRAZ concept and today it plays an important role in daily SEVENTH Fleet operations.

After a stop-over in Japan for three days and a change of command in Subic Bay on 3 December, where Commander William L. READ relieved Commander TESH, KING returned to San Diego on 20 December, where the rest of the month was spent as a leave period.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Although many lessons were learned during 1966, the key areas of concern involved helo operations and the PIRAZ concept. Because the time spent at Flight Quarters was greater than anticipated, the assignment of only Ship-fitters and Damage Controlmen to the flight deck detail eventually proved costly, as the material condition of the ship gradually declined without their daily close attention to plumbing leaks, broken stanchions, chairs, equipment, etc.

Aggressive use of the KING's helicopter enabled quick pickups of downed pilots who would otherwise have been lost since they had become entangled in their parachute as they hit the water. Quick response also reduced possible pilot pick up by numerous junks often in area and reduction in medical complications of any injuries sustained.

PIRAZ station required more air controllers than a DLG normally carries. As a result, controllers were borrowed from cruisers and carriers throughout Yankee Team operations. It is recommended that a ship carry a minimum of seven (7) air controllers when assigned duties on PIRAZ station.

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