

U. S. S. NAVARRO (APA-215)
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

APA215/16/JWH:rpq
5727
Ser: 17

6 JAN 1964

From: Commanding Officer, USS NAVARRO (APA-215)
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Command History Report Symbol OPNAV 5757-4; submission of

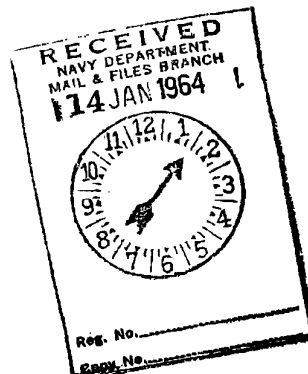
Ref: (a) OPNAV Instruction 5750.7
(b) COMPHIEPAC Instruction 5727.1A

Encl: (1) Command History for Year 1963

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosure (1) is submitted.

John D. Brink
JOHN D. BRINK

Copy to:
COMPHIEPAC
COMPHIBRON SEVEN



35320

COMMAND HISTORY FOR YEAR 1963

New Year's Day, 1963, found the Attack Troop Transport Navarro located in Todd Shipyard, San Pedro, California, completing her eight-week interim overhaul. Leaving Todd in mid-January, the next few weeks were spent conducting independent ship's exercises and undergoing refresher training in the San Diego area. Upon completion of refresher training, a week was spent in her home port of Long Beach, California, preparing for forthcoming amphibious refresher training.

Embarking seventeen Naval Reservists, the Navarro departed Long Beach in early March to begin three busy weeks of amphibious type training. This, too, took her to San Diego, where she was under the operational control of Amphibious Operational Training Unit, Pacific. During the second week of this training, a full-scale ship-to-shore movement demonstration was given by Navarro's boat group. The demonstration was observed by Vice Admiral E. P. Holmes, the new Commander Amphibious Force, Pacific, and forty-three foreign attaches.

Having completed all refresher training on 22 March, a short and busy week was spent back in Long Beach preparing for and receiving an overall Administrative Inspection given by U.S.S. Mathews (AKA-96). An overall grade of GOOD was received for the inspection.

A two week leave and upkeep period was then afforded the Navarro. At the end of this period Hawaii "called" and she once again sailed from her home port. An eight week series of tests in the Hawaiian Sea Frontier, dubbed Operation "Autumn Gold", took her to Pearl Harbor. Upon completion of the operation, the "Autumn Gold" test director stated that an unbelievable score of 99.92 per cent for personnel efficiency had been achieved by Navarro.

Returning from MIDPAC operations in mid-June, preparations commenced for two weeks of upcoming squadron training off the coast of California. Known as Exercise "7 Ops", all eleven ships of Amphibious Squadron Seven participated. Commencing with an opposed sortie from Long Beach on 8 July, the exercise provided opportunities for two full-scale amphibious landings, an underway replenishment, communications and CIC drills, merchant ship convoy procedure drills, gunnery shoots, and much OOD training during tactical maneuvering. The two weeks were highlighted by a week-end in San Francisco where eight hundred fifty San Franciscans visited the Navarro and over eleven thousand persons visited one or more ships of the squadron.

"7 Ops" over, Navarro entered Long Beach Naval Shipyard where it was hoped that the cause of and cure for a severe turbine vibration could be found. It was here, on 20 July, that Captain John D. Brink relieved Captain John C. Borden and became Navarro's thirteenth Commanding Officer.

Enclosure (1)

Further complications arising with her turbine, the Navarro was unable to deploy with other ships of the squadron on 17 September for the Western Pacific. A few days later, however, sea trials were successfully conducted and, after a week of amphibious refresher training at Coronado Roads, she rejoined the squadron in Pearl Harbor on 9 October.

Leaving Pearl Harbor a week later, Phase Three of CONVEX "Pier Head" was conducted. "Pier Head" entailed the movement of a simulated merchant ship convoy (PHIBRON 7) from EASTPAC to WESTPAC with various groups of destroyers and minesweepers acting as a protective escort and submarine units acting as enemy forces along the way. The exercise proved highly successful and officially ended for Navarro when she arrived at Buckner Bay, Okinawa, on 30 October.

November and December were both very busy months. After loading troops in Okinawa and transporting them to Numazu, Japan, the ship called on Yokosuka, Japan, for a ten day period of upkeep. Upon completion of this, the next few weeks were spent carrying other Marine units from Okinawa to Kaohsiung, Taiwan, and Subic Bay, Philippines.

Early December found eighteen ships of Task Force 76 assembled in Buckner Bay for a week of type training. The week's training, known as "76 Ops", was reminiscent of the earlier "7 Ops", in that it afforded occasion for the conduct of many gunnery, damage control, underway replenishment, and amphibious evolutions.

The Christmas season was partially spent in participating in a very unusual and amusing "operation". After a week of upkeep in Sasebo, Japan, the Navarro sailed for Pusan, Korea, where 550 passengers, including 86 females, were loaded for a rest and recreation cruise. New Year's Eve 1963 saw Navarro sailing into Hong Kong Harbor to commence a well-earned five days of liberty.

365 days and 22,681 miles later, Navarro faces 1964 ready as ever to fulfill any requirement for which she may be called upon.

Enclosure (1)

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U. S. S. NAVARRO (APA-215)
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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DEC 18 1962

From: Commanding Officer, USS NAVARRO (APA-215)
To: Chief of Naval Operations

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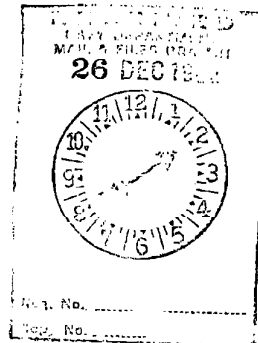
Encl: (1) Command History

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

John C. Borden
JOHN C. BORDEN

Copy to:

COMPHIBPAC
COMPHIBRON SEVEN



Enclosure (1)

COMMAND HISTORY FOR YEAR 1962

The Attack Troop Transport Navarro departed from Long Beach, California, on 22 January 1962, to begin a tour of duty in the Western Pacific that was to keep her until 25 August 1962, when she returned to Long Beach as heroine of the Thailand crisis.

Operation Prairie Wolf, an opposed sortie exercise from the Long Beach Harbor and convoy exercise going into Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was the first of several multi-ship operations that was to involve Navarro. Steaming with other units of COMPHIBRON Seven, and with the assistance of submarines, screen units, and aircraft, Navarro came through the exercise in outstanding order.

After two days in Pearl Harbor, Navarro steamed to Buckner Bay, Okinawa, where she left the Marines whom she had transported from Camp Pendleton, California, and went on to Subic Bay, Philippines, which was to be her "home away from home" for months to come.

Upon arrival in Subic Bay, several hundred Marines were embarked and Navarro became a part of the three-ship ready amphibious squadron, along with an amphibious assault ship and dock landing ship.

After a three-day "Gecko II" amphibious exercise with the other amphibious ready ships in the Subic Bay area in March, and a six-day visit to Hong Kong in April, Navarro joined several dozen other ships of the United States, Philippine and Australian navies for Operation Tulungan. Named for the Tagalog word meaning "help me", the Tulungan operation was one of the largest scale amphibious operations since World War II. With the help of units of Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps from the three SEATO nations, the landing force was landed successfully on the island of Mindoro in the Southern Philippines.

In May, a few days before a scheduled "rest and recreation" visit to Hong Kong, the three ships of the amphibious ready squadron received word to get underway unexpectedly. With their destination known only to a select few, the ships steamed to the Gulf of Siam and awaited further orders. Then the word was given to land Marines in Bangkok, Thailand. While the amphibious assault ship landed her troops and equipment by helicopters from the Gulf, the Navarro, followed by the dock landing ship, slowly steamed up the long, winding river to Bangkok, where they off-loaded their troops and equipment in record time. While the Marines were going to the Thailand-Laos border to ward off Communist threats, the amphibious ready group made their way back to Subic Bay to stand by once more, ready to go to any Southeast Asian hotspot on a moment's notice.

In June, Navarro went to Hong Kong for another six-day visit, and in July, after being relieved as ready transport ship, she departed Subic Bay for Yokosuka, Japan. After ten days at Yokosuka, Navarro steamed to Buckner Bay, Okinawa, where she embarked a thousand Marines-- the same Marines who were transported to Thailand by the amphibious ready group in May.

Leaving Okinawa on 11 August, Navarro returned to Long Beach two weeks later, on 25 August. A leave and upkeep period followed and on 12 October, Navarro, along with the USS ESTES (AGC-12), departed for Puget Sound, Washington, for Operation Shore Line.

Embarking several hundred Army Troops from near-by Fort Lewis Army Base, Navarro prepared for a week of amphibious operations. However, the exercise was cut short by the Cuban situation, and on 23 October, Navarro departed Tacoma for San Diego.

A period of training and upkeep followed in the San Diego -- Long Beach Area, and on 3 December, Navarro entered Todd Shipyard in San Pedro for her interim overhaul.