

GUIDE LINES

NEWSLETTER 2-61

1 July 1961

Dear Families and Friends of the GUIDE

As we begin our third month of deployment, I would like to take this opportunity to bring you up-to-date on the latest "courses steered" by the GUIDE. On May 1, amid tears on the Pier and short tempers aboard ship, we took in all lines and proceeded to sea and our rendezvous with the SEVENTH Fleet. In short order, we settled down to a normal steaming routine and prepared to face the elements.

The first three days were very rough and some of our "most salty" crew members found difficulty in staying in the messdecks during meal hours. By May 4, the weather abated and we intensified our training program in order to acquire the knifeedge sharpness expected of all units operating in the Western Pacific. On Sunday, May 7, we highlined movies with the USS EXCEL and also presented them with a stuffed rat which we designed as an item to be transferred throughout the division as the occasion warrants.

The remainder of our leg to Pearl Harbor was routine and about noon on May 10, we entered Pearl Harbor, situated on the island paradise of Oahu, Hawaii.

Our stay was a brief one for fuel and supplies, but with ample time for the crew to enjoy tours and swimming parties. The famed Waikiki beach and Diamond Head furnished excellent photo material for our shutter bugs, while surfboarding and swimming provided for our athletic types. Wild orchids along the roadways and flowers of all descriptions make driving around the island a most rewarding experience.

Setting sail once more, we headed for Midway Island. Enroute we conducted a gunnery exercise. We did so well that we even received congratulations from the commodore. All in all we "threw out" 352 rounds on seven firing passes. Of course with the Executive Officer keeping the gun on target and the highly efficient loading crew keeping ammo up to the gun, we couldn't miss and from reports about the target sleeve, we really saturated it. Also, with Al Moore's big foot kicking the trigger pedal the ammo just had to go.

Midway, our next stop, is the home of the Legion Albatross and has been designated as a sanctuary for these large brown birds. The Legion Albatross, most commonly known as the "Gooney Bird" migrates yearly to Midway for the purpose of rearing its young. Unlike many birds, the baby gooney is born without feathers. Instead they are covered by a very thick, fuzzy fur, similar to a bear cub. Since there is little else of interest on the island, our stay was a very short one lasting only a few hours, during which time we refueled and replenished our supply of fresh water.

At both Midway and Pearl Harbor, we received much welcome mail from home. The days at sea were almost worth the effort just to receive such a large stack of "fan" mail.

Only a few miles west of Midway lies the 180th Meridian, the International Date Line, and a number of men, new to the Western Pacific Area, were initiated into the mysteries of the Royal Domain of the Golden Dragon as we crossed. The mystery is "What happened to 17 May?" Every man aboard added one day to his life without drawing one breath as required by the Golden Dragon. No one was worried though, since the lost day will be given back when we return from WestPac.

Less than 48 hours from Midway we encountered the outer edges of typhoon Alice. For several days we had rainy, rough weather, but finally managed to out maneuver the storm and sailed once more on smooth seas under clear skies.

Arriving in Tokyo bay late in the afternoon of 26 May, we anchored and commenced a much needed clean-up of the ship. The heavy seas and rainy weather had taken their toll and it was up to us to make sure our ship was the cleanest, brightest and smartest of the division upon entering port. All hands turned to with zeal and by taps that evening we had turned out a fine looking ship. New paint was applied where it was needed, Soap, water and good old fashioned "Elbow grease" took care of the remainder.

While most of the crew worked on cleaning up the ship, a boat and boat crew were dispatched to Yokosuka to receive any mail that was waiting for us. So in addition to having the finest looking ship in the Division, we also had good high morale, thanks to you folks at home.

As yet we have had no serious difficulties. There were a few anxious moments spent over fuel consumption and we had to transfer two men for medical observation while in Pearl Harbor however, we have since received them back aboard and there are no casualties of any nature at the present time.

Following our arrival in Yokosuka on 27 May, we were assigned to dry dock to complete our voyage repairs. Once again our crew demonstrated their ability and their desire to have the best ship in the force. We turned out much of the work that couldn't be handled by the shipyard in addition to maintaining our normal routine.

Tours were scheduled to Tokyo, Kamakura (Sight of the Great Buddha) and many other interesting sights in and around the area. Once again, our shutter bugs were in "seventh heaven" with all the interesting photographic material to be found.

The inter-division sports program is underway with vigor. GUIDE teams include Softball, Flag Football, golf, bowling (2 teams), basketball, and indoor sports of Pinochle, checkers, chess and acey ducey. High scoring ship for the overall program will receive a "Comodore's Trophy". Of course the GUIDE intends to take all points and therefore win the trophy.

After completion of our dry dock period, we held sea trials and made final adjustments to items that needed it and then began making preparations for our trip to Kobe Japan. This trip was for relaxation and recreation, however there was still a certain amount of normal routine that had to be carried out.

During our three day stay in Kobe, we entertained Japanese orphans and received a very nice, front page, article complete with picture in the local Japanese newspaper. Only one problem - no one on board can read Japanese.

On Tuesday, 20 June we departed Kobe and headed South for Sasebo and Western Pacific headquarters of the Mine Force.

Once again there was opportunity for the camera bugs to exercise their trigger fingers and after spending a weekend in port, we went to sea for type training and some minesweeping exercises. In Sasebo we off loaded 55 bundles of clothing which we brought over from the States and which is ear marked for distribution to needy families in the Far East.

Upon completion of the training we returned to port for pay day and this morning departed for Hong Kong by way of Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

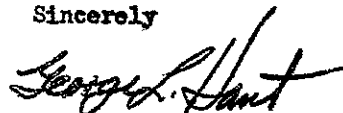
The GUIDE is now a member of the strongest and most ready peace time Naval Force ever to show the "Stars and Stripes." Our attitude is slightly different over here in that we are constantly striving to maintain the high degree of readiness demanded by the tense situation in the Far East. The GUIDE and each member of her crew is prepared for the tremendous task of preventing further inroads of Communist aggression. Through the President's "People to People" program we are constantly striving to win new friends for our American way of life.

We are extremely proud of our responsibility, however we have never lost sight of the extra responsibility we have left behind in the hands of our families and loved ones. Our married crew members are aware of the courage displayed by the Navy wife and the children who miss their fathers. The news we receive from home has a definite bearing on the morale and well being of each member of the crew.

As most of you no doubt already know, this will be my last letter as Commanding Officer of the GUIDE. I have received my orders to Post Graduate School at Monterey California and I will be departing for there very shortly, as I expect my relief to arrive on board while we are in Hong Kong. I would like to take this opportunity to extend to all of you, as well as to our fine crew, my appreciation for making this tour a most pleasant and rewarding experience. It was a wonderful opportunity to command so fine a ship and it is with a certain amount of regret that I leave the GUIDE here in WestPac. If it had been possible, I would have preferred to bring the ship back to Long Beach in November.

It is my sincere wish that good fortune shall continue to smile upon the GUIDE, her crew and their loved ones throughout the remainder of this cruise and for all time to come.

Sincerely



George L. Hart  
LCDR, U. S. Navy  
Commanding Officer