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BRIGHT PENNY

January - March 2024

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE USS BERKELEY (DDG-15)

Happy New Year 2024!

Director's Update



Happy New Year and wishing you and your family a healthy and enjoyable 2024! The years just keep sailing by and our beloved USS Berkeley has now been retired from the U.S. Navy for over 30 years.

2023 was a productive year for the association as we held our latest reunion in Corpus Christi in September. We are now in the initial planning stages for the 2025 reunion in the Northwest sector with voting now taking place on our web site. If you haven't voted yet, please do so soon. Once our next host city is nominated, we will select dates for the September/October 2025 time frame and begin our search for a host hotel.

In late 2023, we began writing association procedures for maintaining our web site, updating the master roster, and reunion planning, etc. Most of these procedures are completed and have been forwarded to other association officers. This year we will ensure we have digital copies of association records such as the Command History Reports, Master Rosters, etc., and that these records are shared with other association officers as well.

Master Roster updating will begin soon and the 2024 master roster will be sent to active 2024 association members in late April. If you haven't updated your contact information in the past three years, please do so through the "Quarterdeck" page on

our web site. Also, please ensure we have your current email address on file. Thanks!

The Year In Review - 1976

The first day of 1976 found the Berkeley berthed at the U.S. Naval Station, San Diego, making preparations for deployment to the Western Pacific and its Operational Propulsion Plant Examination. Under the command of Commander Clifford F. Homan, the ship got underway on January 5th for Naval Gunfire Support Qualification and became the first 5"/54 gun ship to pass all NGFS requirements under the 16,000 yard range restriction at San Clemente Island. Efforts of Ship Training and Alignment Verification (10-14 November 1975) and subsequent Fleet Operational Readiness Accuracy Checks (18-19 December 1975) were significant factors in the preparation and successful completion of the NGFS qualification.

Berkeley was underway two additional periods in January. On January 16th, the ship conducted sea trials in the Southern California operating area, and from January 26th to 28th she cruised with an engineering Mobile Training Team onboard. However, due to heavy seas, the team could not be utilized fully for drills.

On January 30th, Berkeley departed San Diego enroute to the Western Pacific. While in transit to Hawaii, Berkeley was assigned to CTG 37.0 in company with the USS Ranger (CV-61) and participated with the

carrier in passive sonar tracking as well as several other training exercises.

Arriving in Pearl Harbor on February 6th, Berkeley was soon underway again on February 9th with the Propulsion Examining Board, Pacific, onboard for the ship's Operational Propulsion Plant Examination. Plagued with severe material deficiencies, Berkeley did not pass the examination. On February 11th, "hot plant" operation was suspended while the ship underwent repairs and comprehensive engineering casualty control training was held utilizing the MTT.

Two weeks later, on February 25th, the ship cast off for sea trials with the Mobile Training Team aboard. Returning to Pearl Harbor on the first of March, Berkeley conducted extensive ECC drills in port prior to getting underway on March 7th. With the PEB embarked again, the OPPE was passed with a grade of Conditionally Satisfactory. On March 12th, Berkeley departed Hawaii for WESTPAC.

Assigned to CTU 35.8, the ship made brief stops at Midway Island and Guam with CTG 77.7. Berkeley chopped to the Seventh Fleet on March 21st and departed Guam on March 23rd. The ship continued its transit to the Philippine Sea and from March 26-31 participated in READEX 2/76, an all-fleet exercise in contingency simulation that pitted "blue" against "orange" forces in a

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Ship's History: January 2024

60 Years Ago, 1964

Dates not specified in Command History log.

50 Years Ago, 1974

- 01-04 Inport, Bremerton, WA
- 04-07 Enroute, Long Beach
- 07-16 Inport Long Beach
- 17 Loadout, Seal Beach
- 18-31 Inport, San Diego

40 Years Ago, 1984

- 01-02 POM inport, San Diego
- 13-19 Enroute, Pearl Harbor
- 20-25 AIREM, SHAREM, BGAREM ASW ops off Hawaii
- 30-31 Inport, Pearl Harbor

30 Years Ago, 1994

In service with the Hellenic Navy of Greece as the H.S. Themistokles

hypothetical war situation. Berkeley arrived in Subic Bay on April 1st and commenced a major upkeep period that was interrupted for storm evasion preparations. April 14-16, Berkeley served as host ship for two Royal British Navy minesweepers who would later return the gesture when Berkeley visited their homeport of Hong Kong.

Out to sea for a week at the end of April to serve as escort with CTG 77.7 in the South China Sea, the ship received excellent marks in two aerial gunnery exercises. Berkeley returned to Subic Bay on May 3rd.

Berkeley visited Hong Kong on May 15th for a 5-day visit in company with the USS Robison (DDG-12), USS Hepburn (FF-1055), and USS Oulett (FF-1077). Berkeley departed Hong Kong on May 20th headed for Subic Bay but encountered tropical storm OLGA which closed the Naval Station. The ship remained at sea using storm evasive tactics until conditions permitted port entry on May 27th.

Berkeley returned to sea on May 29th for MISSILEX 4/76. During MISSILEX, Berkeley was the only DDG able to fire missiles successfully, and fired two ITR missiles while devoting the emphasis of training to AAW.

Berkeley was again underway June 4-7 for MULTIPLEX 3/76 which provided much needed training for the ship's combat systems teams from AAW to ASW operational areas. During the following in-port period, Berkeley hosted the HMAS Derwent, a destroyer escort of the Royal Australian Navy.

Returning to Subic Bay on June 26th, Berkeley celebrated the 4th of July holiday in port and remained pier side for upkeep until underway July 14th for type commander's training emphasizing engineering casualty control drills. Concluding the TYT period, the ship headed for Taiwan and the port city of Kaohsiung for a

four-day visit beginning July 22nd. The ship left Taiwan for the South China Sea for SHARKHUNT XVI, an exercise with the Republic of China Navy designed to improve the mutual training and readiness of both navies. The exercise ended on July 29th and the Berkeley spent the end of the month in Subic Bay. This visit signaled the completion of the ship's Bicentennial project, repairing and refurbishing a local Filipino elementary school.

Berkeley participated in MULTIPLEX/MISSILEX 1-7T which ended the ship's WESTPAC operational commitments. On August 8th, the ship headed back home with a stop in Guam from August 12th through the 22nd for upkeep. Outchopping the Seventh Fleet on August 25th and becoming a unit of TG 37.9 of the Third Fleet, the ship arrived in Pearl Harbor on August 30th. Underway on September 1st with male dependents for a Tiger cruise.

Berkeley arrived in San Diego on September 6th. While in WESTPAC, the ship had been designated a Bicentennial command, one of only 10% of all Navy afloat units honored.

The ship was in leave and upkeep status for the remainder of September and conducted a tender availability with the USS Prairie (AD-15).

The week of October 18th, Berkeley passed the Nuclear Technical Proficiency Inspection and an on-site audit by the Navy Regional Finance Center. The ship was also designated as SurfPac Nuclear Unit of the Year.

Berkeley was later underway November 29th to December 13th plane guarding for the USS Coral Sea (CV-43) and later the USS Constellation (CV-64). The Constellation later congratulated the Berkeley for its exceptional plane guarding ability.

In port on December 13th, Berkeley remained pier-side at the Naval Station, San Diego, for the close of 1976.