



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS GONZALEZ (DDG 66)
FPO AE 09570-1284

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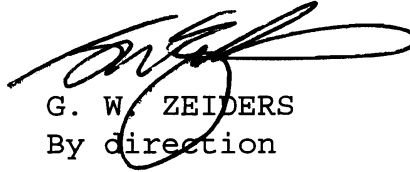
From: Commanding Officer, USS GONZALEZ (DDG 66)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Naval Historical
Center, Washington Navy Yard, 901 M Street SE, Bldg. 57,
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Subj: USS GONZALEZ COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative

1. Per reference (a), the following package is submitted to document the history of USS GONZALEZ for 1997.


G. W. ZEIDERS
By direction

Command Composition and Organization

1. Mission. USS GONZALEZ is a state-of-the-art technological masterpiece. She is capable of conducting anti-war, anti-submarine, anti-surface, and strike warfare simultaneously. DDG 66 utilizes the AEGIS Combat System in conjunction with Anti-air and Cruise missiles, Guns, Torpedoes, Electronic Countermeasures, and extensive Communications capabilities to provide unparalleled firepower and flexibility. She is an ideal combatant to complement the Navy's "Forward-From the Sea" philosophy and provides a truly flexible ship to serve the Fleet for decades to come.
2. Organizational Structure
 - a. Commander Naval Surface Forces, Atlantic
 - b. Commander Destroyer Squadron Eighteen
 - c. Commanding Officer, USS GONZALEZ (DDG 66)
3. Commanding Officer. Commander Daniel Patrick Holloway
4. Permanent Duty Station. USS GONZALEZ (DDG 66), FPO AE 09570-1284, Portsmouth, Virginia
5. No aircraft assigned this unit.

Command Chronology

- January 12, 1993 - Start of Fabrication GONZALEZ
- February 3, 1994 - Keel laid
- October 22, 1994 - Mast Stepping Ceremony
- January 19, 1995 - Precommissioning Detachment GONZALEZ established at Naval Base Norfolk, VA
- February 18, 1995 - GONZALEZ launched and christened
- October 6, 1995 - GONZALEZ crew travels to Edinburg, TX to celebrate All-American City nomination
- Transit to Bath Iron Works' Portland facility for sonar dome installation.
- Return transit to Bath Iron Works, Bath, ME.
- Combined trials conducted, Gulf of Maine.
- June 21, 1996 - PCD GONZALEZ dis-established
- July 26, 1996 - Ship's Custody Transfer and move aboard, commissioned in-service special.
- September 19, 1996 - Sail away from Bath Iron Works, transit to Portland, ME.
- September 20, 1996 - Brief stop for fuel, Portland, ME.
- September 20, 1996 - Underway for Naval Station Norfolk, VA.
- September 23, 1996 - Arrive Naval Station Norfolk, VA.
- October 1, 1996 - Underway for Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, VA.
- October 1, 1996 - Arrive Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, VA.
- October 3, 1996 - Depart Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, VA underway for Naval Station Ingleside, TX.
- October 7, 1996 - Arrive Naval Station Ingleside, TX and commence preparations for commissioning.
- October 12, 1996 - Commissioned into active service
- October 15, 1996 - Sail away from Naval Station Ingleside, TX for Port Canaveral, FL.
- October 17, 1996 - Arrive Port Canaveral, FL.
- October 22, 1996 - Depart Port Canaveral, FL for AUTEC OPAREA.
- November 1, 1996 - Arrive Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
- November 2, 1996 - Depart Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
- November 8, 1996 - Arrive Philipsburg, St. Martin, Dutch Antillies.
November 12, 1996 - Depart Philipsburg, St. Martin, Dutch Antillies.

Command Chronology (cont.)

- November 12, 1996 - Grounded on coral reef off St. Martin.
- November 13, 1996 - Arrive Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
- November 21, 1996 - Commander Daniel Patrick Holloway relieves Commander Frederick Donald Allard, Jr. as Commanding Officer USS GONZALEZ.
- November 23, 1996 - Depart Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
- December 1, 1996 - Arrive Naval Station Norfolk, VA.
- January 7, 1997 - Depart Naval Station Norfolk, VA underway enroute Portland, ME.
- January 9, 1997 - Divert due to heavy weather, arrive Naval Weapons Station Earle, NJ.
- January 13, 1997 - Depart NWS Earle, underway enroute Portland, ME.
- January 15, 1997 - Arrive Portland, ME commence extended post ship's availability.
- January 24, 1997 - Announce official homeport change from Norfolk, VA to Bath, ME.
- February 14, 1997 - Formal change of administrative homeport to Portland, ME.

Command Narrative

On May 23, 1946 in the small Texas town of Edinburg, barely a stone's throw from the Mexican border, Alfredo Cantu Gonzalez was born to Dolia Gonzalez. 'Freddy' as he was known to friends and family, did not come from wealth or status, but from a home built on pride and honor. As a single parent, his mother instilled in him a sense of moral strength and character. She built a young man who evolved into a community's as well as a nation's idea of a hero. Teachers remember Freddy being a good student and a hard worker. Friends remember young Freddy as a member of the high school football team who made up for a lack of size and strength with effort and determination. Everyone remembers Freddy as a true American hero.

Alfredo Gonzalez enlisted in the Marine Corps in the summer of 1965. The country he proudly served called upon Gonzalez to fulfill his duties in Vietnam. It was in the Marines that he met his calling. Within his first two years he returned from a long tour in Vietnam and had advanced to the rank of Sergeant. One month later, after learning many of soldiers Gonzalez previously served with were killed, he returned for a second tour in Vietnam as a platoon sergeant with 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, 1st Marine Division. On February 4, 1968, while participating in the initial phase of Operation HUE CITY, in the vicinity of Thua Thien, SGT Alfredo Gonzalez fell mortally wounded from hostile rocket fire.

Gonzalez' actions in battle, as read from his Medal of Honor citation:

"...on 31 January 1968...the Marines received a heavy volume of enemy fire. Sergeant Gonzalez aggressively maneuvered the Marines in his platoon and directed their fire until the area was cleared of snipers... the column was again hit by intense enemy fire. One of the Marines on top of a tank was wounded and fell to the ground in an exposed position. With complete disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Gonzalez ran through the fire swept area to the assistance of his injured comrade...though receiving fragmentation wounds during the rescue, he carried the wounded Marine to a covered position...with the increased volume and accuracy of enemy fire...the company was halted. Realizing the gravity of the situation, Sergeant Gonzalez exposed himself to the enemy fire and moved his platoon...though fully aware of the danger involved, he moved...and destroyed the hostile position with hand grenades. Although seriously wounded again on 3 February, he steadfastly refused medical treatment and

continued to supervise his men and lead the attack. On 4 February, the enemy had again pinned the company down...Sergeant Gonzalez fearlessly moved from position to position...successfully knocked out a rocket position and suppressed much of the enemy fire before falling mortally wounded."

Gonzalez went "above and beyond the call of duty" in his actions. He made the ultimate sacrifice but without the repeated acts of gallantry displayed by Gonzalez, most, if not all, members of Third Platoon, Company A, First Battalion, First Marines, First Marine Division would have perished at Hue City.

At the 1991 christening of USS HUE CITY (CG 66), an AEGIS cruiser of the Ticonderoga class in 1991 former Secretary of the Navy H. Lawrence Garret, III declared a warship would be named after a servicemember who had fallen during the battle of Hue City. HUE CITY was the first American man-of-war to be named after a battle in what was, at that time, the United States' last large-scale armed conflict, the Vietnam War. At that ceremony, Garret addressed an audience of patriots and veterans, many who had experienced the battle for which HUE CITY was named. Members from First Battalion, First Marines traveled from all over to reunite and remember comrades fallen in action.

What many thought would be an empty promise made by a politician became reality with a twist of irony. The next class of warship the Navy began production on was the incredibly capable Arleigh Burke class destroyer, named after Admiral Arleigh '31 Knot' Burke, a World War II destroyerman and former Chief of Naval Operations.

The sixteenth Arleigh Burke destroyer began as a number somewhere in dark corners of someone's mind as just another in a line of awesome warships, or perhaps as just one item on a large list of expenditures in a budget or proposal that made its way through the halls of the Pentagon and Capitol Hill, and even the White House. No matter how DDG 66 was initially created, little thought was placed on the significant impact that a ship called GONZALEZ would place on lives across the country.

The first snow had fallen and been covered over again in the tiny town of Bath, Maine, a picturesque New England town on the Kennebec River with a most distinguishing characteristic. From miles away the twin towering cranes of the Bath Iron Works Corporation can be seen as they move essential parts in one of the nation's oldest shipyards. Generations of men and women have built a great portion of the Navy's arsenal in the snow and ice of Maine's winter. On January 12, 1993, they began again. Fabrication on what was to be known to hundreds of shipyard

workers as Hull 458, and soon to the rest of the world as DDG 66, had commenced.

The art of shipbuilding has progressed as technology has advanced through the ages, creating a warship with an estimated cost of \$900 million is indeed an art. Much of the initial fabrication, the cuts and welds, take place in a warehouse away from the shipyard itself. As the puzzle that is an AEGIS destroyer comes together, fabrication is moved to a warehouse inside the yard itself. It is there that a ship grows from what looks to the common man as nothing more than twisted metal.

Eventually the time comes when the age old tradition of shipbuilding must occur. Like the Phoenicians centuries before, BIW's craftsmen delicately balance the backbone of the ship, its keel, on a system of blocks that will allow it to slide gracefully into the water. Almost a year after fabrication had begun the keel of DDG 66 was laid on February 3, 1994.

Seamen are full of legends and folklore and many of those fabled stories evolved into traditions that are still held today. One such tradition is the stepping of the mast.

"In Scotland, after the blessing and the proper directional alignment had been attended to, it was the duty of the master builder to secrete a gold coin 'for luck' somewhere in the splicing of the keel, its whereabouts known only to the owner and himself. And not only was a gold coin placed in the keel but sometimes a sovereign was fastened to the main beam of the deck, according to a Scots informant. It is highly possible that the memory of this act has been retained in a horseplay inflicted on green hands in American naval ships who are sometimes told to go below and 'polish the golden rivet' located in the most inaccessible part of the keel."

"Once the launch had been completed the vessel was ready to be fitted for sea - mast stepped, rigging rove, engines aligned, etc. At this point money was invariably placed under the mast step, preferably silver although gold coins appear to have been used on occasion. So deep rooted was this custom that today a sixpence is often driven into the main beam of fishing vessels and a silver coin is used to align the engine or inserted under the engine bed. It is recalled that when a vessel was broken up people used to gather around to pick up the sovereigns that invariably lay beneath the heel of the mast. The original purpose of these coins was to pay a tithe to the god of the winds, but as the combustion engine replaced sail it was only natural to think of these coins as propitiating the god of noise."

Folklore and the Sea, by Horace Beck, Wesleyan University Press, 1973.

"In Pomerania, stolen wood is employed in building a ship, a small piece being inserted in the keel. Such wood makes the ship go faster at night. If the first blow struck in fashioning the keel draws fire, the ship will be lost on her first trip. A piece of silver, preferably an old coin, is placed under the keel of the mast of a new ship, as then she will make profitable voyages."

"Under the keel of an old Spanish ship, whose wreck was found in the Orkneys in the 1800's, was a coin dated 1618, wrapped in canvas, and evidently placed there as a charm."

Legends and Superstitions of the Sea and Sailor, by LT Fletcher S Bassett, USN, Sampson Tow, Maraston, Searle, & Rivington, 1885

It is also believed that coins placed at the foot of the mast pay the toll to carry the souls of the crew across the river Styx.

The mast stepping ceremony for DDG 66 took place on October 22, 1994. Commander Frederick D. Allard, Jr., GONZALEZ' Commanding Officer and various Supervisor of Shipbuilding and Bath Iron Works officials placed the coins at the base of GONZALEZ' swept mast in a small ceremony. Sixty-six cents and a medallion of St. Theresa was placed at the base of the mast. Each coin holds a special meaning. A dime from 1946 represents the year Alfredo Gonzalez was born. It is also the year [REDACTED] was born. A dime from 1966 represents the hull number, the birth of [REDACTED] and the birth of LT [REDACTED], the ship's Operation's Officer. A dime from [REDACTED] represents the year that CDR Allard's stepson was born and the year LT [REDACTED], Weapons Officer, was born. A 1968 dime represents the year Alfredo Gonzalez was killed in action. A dime from [REDACTED] represents the year CDR Allard's stepson was born. A penny from 1946 represents the year Alfredo Gonzalez was born. A penny from [REDACTED] represents the year CDR Allard was born. A 1968 penny represents the year Alfredo Gonzalez died in action. A 1977 penny represents the year CDR Allard was commissioned and the year [REDACTED] was born. A [REDACTED] penny represents the year CDR and Mrs. Allard were married.

Seven hundred and fifty six miles south of Bath, at the Navy's largest Naval Base, Norfolk Virginia, a small cadre of prospective crewmembers to USS GONZALEZ assembled in building L-28 to start an 18 month residence called PCD GONZALEZ. Precommissioning Detachment GONZALEZ is where the plankowners of "GOOD SHIP GONZALEZ" got their start. Manning a ship of the line takes as much care as building her. Every job and task must be preceded by countless hours of training and PCD GONZALEZ' sole

responsibility was to ensure that GONZALEZ was trained to fight. January 19, 1995 PCD GONZALEZ was formally established. Eighteen months later all 321 members were trained and reported to Bath, ME for the final phasing of Precommissioning Unit GONZALEZ. On June 21, 1996 the doors of PCD GONZALEZ were closed as the detachment was disestablished, making room for the next select group of men and women who will create the spirit of a warship in the United States Navy.

The next significant event in the life of a ship is the launching and christening. This time honored tradition's origin can be traced back to when ships first put to sea. It is a precisely engineered event, the timing of the ship's sponsor breaking the traditional bottle of champagne over the bow must be synchronized with the controlled crash that is a warship displacing over 8,500 tons sliding into the river. On February 18, 1995 Mrs. Dolia Gonzalez traveled to snowy Maine to honor the memory of her son once again, this time perhaps the highest honor, second to the Medal of Honor, that a nation can bestow upon a member of the armed forces. The ceremony was full of speeches from BIW's leaders and Maine and Texas congressional representatives, and as the tide of the Kennebec River reached its crest an emotional Mrs. Gonzalez said, "I christen thee Gonzalez." With a swing the bottle broke and GONZALEZ was afloat. Tradition holds that the spirit of the sponsor enters the ship at the christening and remains forever.

Mrs. Dolia Gonzalez was the first of six children born to the late Luz and Hermine Gonzalez of Edinburg, Texas. She raised her son alone in the Rio Grande Valley in the 1950's working as a waitress, a job she still holds today. She hadn't planned on being the mother of a hero. Receiving the Medal of Honor on behalf of her son was a grand moment in her life, but not the best. Her son was her pride and joy. Today she spends time volunteering at the Freddy Gonzalez Elementary School in Edinburg.

Over thirty crew members from GONZALEZ visited a liberty port of a different sort the weekend of October 6, 1995. Actually many would call it their 'homeport', even though most have never been there before. They traveled to one of the most patriotic cities in the United States, Edinburg, Texas, home of ship's namesake, SGT Alfredo Gonzalez, and hero of the small southeast Texas town.

The city of Edinburg, was nominated as an All-American City for standing above other communities in patriotism and community spirit. Edinburg is still the home of Mrs. Dolia Gonzalez, ship's sponsor and mother of SGT Alfredo Gonzalez, who works as a

waitress at a local hotel and volunteers free time to the school named in her sons honor and in other community efforts.

The long journey for the crew of GONZALEZ began in the early morning hours of Friday as they prepared for the four hour flight to Corpus Christi, TX, and the three hour bus ride to Edinburg, a small town just north of the Mexican-American border. The trip had been in the works for several weeks and last minute details were being finalized on the bus ride down. After a few logistical setbacks, the long day had begun to wear the spirits of GONZALEZ sailors, but all of that changed once the bus neared it's destination. "Everyone was real quiet on the ride down, then once we saw the sign for Freddy Gonzalez Drive (a street named in his honor), the guys started jumping up and down, cheering, and giving each other high fives," said Lieutenant [REDACTED], Combat Information Center Officer and coordinator for the trip.

The original plan of events had the crew meeting the students of Freddy Gonzalez Elementary school for a special presentation. Many of the crew members were anticipating there to be no one at the school when the bus pulled up a little after 5:00 PM. To the crew's disbelief the children, parents, teachers were waiting, singing a moving rendition of 'Anchors Aweigh'. "I couldn't believe it, my jaw just dropped when I stepped off the bus," commented Electronics Technician Second Class [REDACTED], from [REDACTED]

"The moment I stepped off the bus and was greeted by all the kids from Freddy Gonzalez Elementary, I understood why it was an 'All-American City'," said Sonar Technician Third Class [REDACTED] of [REDACTED].

The students had a planned presentation that included reading of poems. and stories about Freddy Gonzalez, their school, and the ship. That wasn't all they had, for each sailor there was a student with a 'spirit bag'. Bags decorated with red, white, and blue were filled with everything from candy to stuffed animals. "I was surprised at the work and effort put in to giving us a warm and heartfelt reception...the enthusiasm was tremendous," said FC3 [REDACTED], from [REDACTED]

Sailors returned the generosity by giving out stickers, taking pictures, answering questions about their jobs, and signing autographs. One mother said that she was so proud of the ship and the crew and that the visit meant a great deal not only to her personally but to the community as well. Sailors were greeted with smiling faces and a friendly handshake everywhere they turned.

Johnny Enconomedes, marshall of the volunteer fire department, escorted the crew to the hotel and gave each of them Edinburg Fire Department ballcap, again welcoming the Sailors to Edinburg.

The big event for the evening was the high school football game, a homecoming rivalry between Edinburg High School and Edinburg North High School where the crew was given a standing ovation during halftime from a packed stadium. "Never have I seen a community welcome the military quite as they have, it is difficult to describe the sense of pride it gives you," stated LT [REDACTED]

After the game the crew had an open invitation to Cadillac Jack's, highlighted when the Edinburg High Class of 1965, Gonzalez' high school class, was on hand to share some real stories about Freddy. "We're proud of him and what he's done and we're proud of you," said one of Gonzalez' classmates.

The next morning the crew marched in the All-American City Parade to the cheers of the community as they lined the streets of downtown Edinburg. At the town plaza CDR Fred Allard presented the ship's flag to the school board to be displayed at the elementary school named in Gonzalez' honor. Additionally, a special letter from the Secretary of the Navy, honoring the town of Edinburg was presented to the community. In turn the Mayor Joe Ochoa presented the key to the city Edinburg saying, "USS GONZALEZ is always welcome to Edinburg, our home is your home." The final presentation was a bouquet of roses to Mrs. Gonzalez. CDR Allard said, "She is truly the matriarch of Edinburg." She welcomed the crew members as each of her own and would introduce a sailor as, "This is one of my boys."

As the crew sampled the hospitality of Edinburg, virtually every sailor was stopped and asked for autographs, to pose for pictures or just answer questions. "The pride in this community is overwhelming," said Lieutenant Commander Jerome Provencher, Executive Officer of GONZALEZ. Gunner's mate Missiles Seaman Recruit [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] said, "The whole town of Edinburg welcomed us, the hospitality didn't stop coming."

The trip was a sort of homecoming of another sort, Personnelman Third class [REDACTED] a resident of Edinburg, is currently assigned to GONZALEZ. "Being back in my home town as a sailor serving aboard GONZALEZ, honoring SGT Alfredo Gonzalez, made me proud of not only myself but also of the city of Edinburg," said [REDACTED]

Most of the crew returned to Norfolk on Saturday afternoon. Later that evening at a smaller dinner, the remaining members of the crew were again recognized and thanked by representatives

from the town. Lydia Ochoa, wife of the town mayor, "The city of Edinburg is proud to have you." Mayor Ochoa added, "You are citizens of Edinburg, you are always welcome."

The community's pride in Gonzalez and the ship was evident, still citizens felt obligated to share their sentiments. Edinburg resident Chris Trevino said, "Take care of that ship, it belongs to Edinburg." Linda Trevino said, "We are so proud of you, it is an honor to have you in our city." A former marine and local resident just walked up to one crew member and began telling the legend of SGT Gonzalez, the story as it was passed on to him. There the old man stood, told his story and began to cry, with that he walked out the door without saying another word.

SGT Alfredo Gonzalez has touched the lives of many and his spirit lives on in the people of the community. His name is visible throughout the town, at a highway, a school, and in the stories told about heroes. The children of Edinburg grow up learning about Freddy and what he did, what he fought for, and what he believed in. They grow up knowing the woman that raised him single-handedly, and today all can see that she works to instill the same qualities in her community as she did her son. Though she is the mother of one of freedom's greatest heroes, she has not let that stop her from living the life she knows. Mrs. Gonzalez works as a waitress in the restaurant of the Echo Hotel.

The crew's response was unanimous. CDR Allard said, "The town really rolled out the red carpet for us." OS2 [REDACTED] from [REDACTED], said, "I believe it was the best time I've had since I came in the Navy and I look forward to going back." FC3 [REDACTED] added, "It will most likely be the most memorable time in my Navy career." FC1 [REDACTED] from [REDACTED], said, "It was a good feeling to have a home away from home." Gunner's mate Master Chief Frank Turnbull, GONZALEZ Command Master Chief said, "The best stateside liberty port I've ever been to."

ET2 [REDACTED] commented, "We have truly developed a relationship with Edinburg that will live on with every member of GONZALEZ for the rest of our lives."

After all the dignitaries had gone home, sailors gone back to their ship, and the community returned to their normal lives, Mrs. Dolia Gonzalez spent Sunday morning waiting tables to the breakfast crowd of locals and hotel guests. Mrs. Gonzalez is a most gracious woman who has now welcomed over 330 officers and crew members into her life and family, and they are all her boys.

While GONZALEZ appears to the naked eye to be nearly complete, inside the skin of the ship the work is far from over. Cables, hoses, pipes and tubes run in all directions making

normal walking virtually impossible. Yet the ship as whole becomes the focus of attention for the yard as BIW employees crawl from stem to stern, keel to masthead day and night, through all weather conditions. GONZALEZ' first underway period rapidly approaches as the ship will sail from Bath to BIW's Portland facility for mounting of GONZALEZ' state of the art sonar and additional work on the propellers that drive the ship through the seas.

The first time a vessel of this magnitude gets underway on its own power is always a special event. To make GONZALEZ' first time underway an extraordinary experience for the crew and builders, Mrs. Dolia Gonzalez was brought from Texas to Maine to, in her own words, "feel her Freddy alive again." GONZALEZ sailors and builders swelled with pride as Mrs. Gonzalez visited. They were more than proud to show their contribution to bringing the spirit of SGT Alfredo Gonzalez alive.

Over 500 riders experienced GONZALEZ (DDG 66) right on target operationally testing all of the ship's major systems. on her BRAVO trial. The highlight of the four day underway period was the testing of the VLS, Vertical Launch System. Shooting a missile is a very precise and intense event with a lengthy series of steps leading up to actually firing the 'bird.' The crew has to know each step intimately for one day their very lives may depend upon a quick and proper launch. As with any major test, there are endless delays due to either weather or technical difficulties. The test goal is an evaluation of a successful "kill." GONZALEZ achieved beyond test requirements and scored a direct hit, a 'skin-to-skin.'

Other systems. tested included firing demonstrations of the ship's 5 inch, 54 caliber gun, used for naval gunfire support or in an anti-air warfare environment. The 20 millimeter Phalanx close in weapons system, GONZALEZ' self defense weapon for missiles, essential in the layered defense concept, was successfully tested. Rapid blooming chaff for the ship's decoy launching system, which is used to deceive the enemy's radar, was simulated proving the launch system is indeed effective.

Several members of the ship's crew who rode the trial got a little more hands-on training than most crews receive. Many GONZALEZ Sailors became acquainted with the ship's control console, actually steering ordered courses, some for the first time. This training was held under the watchful tutelage of Bath Iron Works' Ship's Crew. The officers who rode had an opportunity to drive GONZALEZ for several of them it was also the first time, but for all the experience was thrilling as most were reluctant to turn over the watch.

The flight deck was operationally tested while underway. An SH-60B, Seahawk from HSL-44, Norfolk, VA, assisting in anti-submarine warfare testing needed fuel and landed on board GONZALEZ. The flightdeck crew, a mix of ship's force on deck and BIW personnel in emergency and refueling stations, performed flawlessly.

The GONZALEZ was put through its paces from bow to stern as everything from the anchor system to the steering systems were tested. Bath Iron Works engineers and ship's force worked as a cohesive team toward the same goal, ensuring the ship is the best fighting ship in the fleet. As always GONZALEZ has proven its motto: "Beyond the Call."

Building the ship GONZALEZ is the primary responsibility of Bath Iron Works and the Navy's Supervisor of Shipbuilding however building the crew which makes GONZALEZ an incredible warship is the responsibility of the Captain and his chain of command. CDR Allard has gone to great lengths to build his crew and the work of all his officers, chief petty officers and petty officers has shown in GONZALEZ' performance at various team trainers, schools and activities to support the Bath / Brunswick, Norfolk and Edinburg communities. LBES, Land Based Engineering Site at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and CSEDS, Combat Systems Engineering Development Site at Moorestown, New Jersey, are the two largest team trainers a ship in the precommissioning process will attend. LBES provides the Engineers an opportunity to work on a live mock up of the GONZALEZ' gas turbine engineering plant. Operators and technician learn both routine operation and casualty control procedures. CSEDS is an actual combat systems. suite allowing the Operations and Combat Systems departments to operate the consoles and push the buttons during simulated attacks against the ship by air, surface and sub surface threats. The instructors from these schools have commended GONZALEZ on their performance and ability. These training teams are the first step in proving GONZALEZ' readiness for operation under any conditions at sea.

On July 26, 1996, GONZALEZ was placed "inservice special" by the Chief of Naval Operations. Known to most as ship's custody and transfer (SCT) GONZALEZ was accepted by the Navy from the Shipbuilder and given to CDR Fred Allard, Jr as Officer in Charge. A very significant day for Plankowners as this was the move aboard day for all crewmembers and really the day GONZALEZ comes alive. Never again would GONZALEZ be left without life as she will always be manned and most assuredly keeping a vigilant watch.

On September 19, 1996, GONZALEZ sailed away from the piers at Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine for the last time, enroute to Ingelside, Texas and commissioning. The commissioning ceremony is a time-honored tradition marking the official transition of a man-of-war from its building and outfitting status to a new role as a unit of the operating forces of the United States Navy. The moment the commissioning pennant is broken, USS GONZALEZ (DDG 66) becomes the absolute responsibility of her Commanding Officer, who, together with his crew, is obligated to keep his ship ready at all times to support and defend the policies of our nation in peace or in war. This is the final and perhaps the most significant event of the triad that brings a ship to life: keel laying, launching and christening, and commissioning.

The commissioning ceremony is a solemn, yet joyous event. It is within this context that the ship is brought to life. On her commissioning day, USS GONZALEZ assumes a unique personality and is infused with the will, the spirit and the dedication of those who serve in her. Indeed, the spirit of her namesake Sergeant Alfredo Gonzalez going "beyond the call", has been imbued in the officers and men serving aboard this vessel. The customs and traditions observed during the ceremony have evolved through the 221 year history of the United States Navy. In the early periods no exact commissioning procedure was prescribed, thus a ship's date of commissioning was recorded as any one of a number of days - when the colors were first raised, when the officers and crew reported aboard, when the first deck log entry was made, or when the ship was first put to sea. Commissioning ceremonies for the United States Navy have remained fundamentally unchanged since USS CONSTITUTION was commissioned in 1798. Like then, USS GONZALEZ "comes alive" today as her crew boards her and operates the topside equipment. During her shakedown cruise, the varied backgrounds and experience of every member of the crew will coalesce into a distinctive team spirit, pride and reputation that will be unique to USS GONZALEZ (DDG 66).

During the commissioning ceremony, the officer taking command of the ship reads his orders from the Navy Department. Upon completion of the reading of the orders, the Commanding Officer will order the Executive Officer to set the watch. He will relay those order to the Navigator who commands the watch team. The watch team is assembled on the pier ready to board the ship. It is the responsibility of the Navigator to bring the watch team onboard via the forward brow. As the watch team boards the ship, the Boatswain's mate pipe them aboard. The Navigator reports to the Executive Officer that the watch is set, then the Navigator receives the long-glass from the Executive Officer. The Officer

of the Deck takes his position on the Quarterdeck and makes the first log entry. The ship is now commissioned as a United States Ship.

Today, the distinctive mark of a commissioned warship is a pennant flown from the highest masthead except when displaced by a flag of higher authority. The commissioning pennant is believed to date from the 17th century, when the Dutch were at war with the English. The Dutch Admiral Maarten Harpertszoon Tromp hoisted a broom at his masthead to indicate his intentions to sweep the English from the sea. This gesture was answered by the English admiral who hoisted a horsewhip, indicating his intention to subdue the Dutch. The English were victorious and since that time the narrow "coachwhip" pennant has been adopted by all nations as the distinctive mark of a ship of war. Throughout the years, one visible and significant manifestation of the commissioned ship has remained constant. Active ships of the United States Navy, from the days of sleek frigates under sail, to the era of the modern AEGIS guided missile destroyers, have proudly flown the commissioning pennant and the "Stars and Stripes". The United States Navy Commissioning Pennant is blue at the hoist with a union of seven white stars, and a horizontal red and white stripe at the fly.

The commissioning ceremony of USS GONZALEZ will live forever in the memories of those who attended. Watching a warship come to life is a moving experience, but to watch the spirit of a man come alive again as his family, friends, comrades and community watch. With nearly 7,000 people in attendance Mrs. Gonzalez stood before the audience and ordered her 'boys' to bring their ship to life. Nearly three hundred sailors of Fightin' Freddy in their finest dress white uniforms ran aboard as every system on the mighty warship came to life.

Following the commissioning ceremony, GONZALEZ remained in Ingleside for tours to the general public until October 15, 1996 where she got underway for Port Canaveral, FL where the anti submarine warfare capability was gearing up for evaluation. Following in port torpedo exercises GONZALEZ sailed for AUTEC along the Tongue of the Ocean to conduct actual submarine tracking and attack scenarios. During this time frame GONZALEZ' self noise was measured to determine when and under what configuration she is most quiet. These were the initial events of GONZALEZ' CSQT, Combat Systems Qualification and Testing, the official final exam of the ship's war fighting capability.

Several days were spent transiting through the Caribbean Sea conducting numerous USW exercises and preparing other aspects of GONZALEZ' combat systems suite for upcoming evolutions.

GONZALEZ pulled into Philipsburg, St. Martin for a much needed liberty weekend. After four days, she sailed again ready to focus on mission ahead. On 12 November, 1996 around 0800, GONZALEZ was leaving her anchorage when she grounded. Put in a scenario that limited her options, the crew of GONZALEZ found themselves in a narrow situation. Life at sea is on the edge and a fraction of a second either way could have avoided tragedy or meant certain doom. GONZALEZ cleared itself of the coral reef that ultimately claimed several blades on both the port and starboard hubs and did significant damage to the sonar dome.

GONZALEZ limped into Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico the morning of November 13, 1996. Immediately upon arrival the investigation to the damage and behind the cause of the incident was convened. Commander Destroyer Squadron Two Six was appointed the investigating officer and found the accident to have been avoidable. The Commanding Officer, Officer of the Deck and Navigator received punitive letters, as a result of the findings and ultimately, CDR Allard was relieved of command.

November 22, 1996 CDR Daniel P. Holloway assumed command of GONZALEZ and the next morning she was again underway. Under tow from USNS APACHE, GONZALEZ began her transit from Puerto Rico to Norfolk, VA. The damage was found to be too significant to facilitate repairs in Puerto Rico and would ultimately require significant overhaul.

GONZALEZ formally arrived at her homeport of Naval Station Norfolk, VA for the first time. She sailed in silently the Sunday following Thanksgiving and met her loved ones. GONZALEZ Sailors had not had a chance to spend time with their families in several months. Some had not seen wives, mothers, sons, and daughters in over eight months, longer than any deployment. The crew stood down over the holiday period, but inspectors from various contractors ran through the engineering plant with a fine tooth comb, looking for additional damage previously unnoticed. It was found in both main reduction gears, which were determined to need replacing.

On January 7, 1997 GONZALEZ again was under tow from Naval Station Norfolk, VA to Bath Iron Work's Portland Facility to drydock the ship and begin repairs. GONZALEZ was slated for a modernization period in the spring of 1997. Vice having two visits to the yards, the Navy and BIW came to agreement on the repairs and modernization for GONZALEZ, a contract estimated to last until late September, 1997.

USS GONZALEZ is the sixteenth Arleigh Burke class destroyer and exists to win the next war at sea. This AEGIS destroyer has been designed to fight anywhere, anytime, against all threats, preserving the peace through sea power. "Beyond the Call" is the motto of GONZALEZ and embodies SGT Gonzalez' actions and devotion to his men. It also embodies the spirit of GONZALEZ' crew as each sailor goes "Beyond the Call" in maintaining GONZALEZ' commitment to the nation.

The mission of GONZALEZ is to be prepared to conduct prompt, sustained combat operations at sea, in support of national policy. She is equipped to operate offensively in a high-density, multithreat environment as an integral member of a carrier battle group or surface action group (SAG). In addition to her own self defense capabilities in anti-air warfare (AAW), anti-submarine warfare (ASW), and anti-surface warfare (ASUW), USS GONZALEZ can effectively provide local area protection to the battle group, SAG, and other military ships.

USS GONZALEZ is equipped with the AN/SPY-1D phased array radar. This radar system incorporates significant advances in the detection capabilities of the AEGIS Weapon System, particularly in its resistance to enemy electronic countermeasures (ECM). Using the SPY-1D and the ship's Mark 99 Fire Control System, USS GONZALEZ can guide its vertically launched Standard Missile to intercept hostile aircraft and missiles at extended ranges. To provide point defense against hostile air targets, USS GONZALEZ is equipped with the Phalanx Close In Weapon System.

USS GONZALEZ is equipped with the Navy's latest ASUW combat systems. Long-range anti-ship and land attack cruise missile capability is provided by Tomahawk missiles, which are launched from her Mark 41 Vertical Launching System (VLS). Her shorter range Harpoon missiles are capable of destroying hostile vessels at ranges in excess of 65 nautical miles. The 5"/54 Caliber gun, in conjunction with the Mark 34 Gun Weapon System, is used against surface ships and close air contacts, and to support forces ashore with Naval Gunfire Support (NGFS).

USS GONZALEZ' AN/SQQ-89 integrated ASW suite is the most advanced anti-submarine warfare system in the world today. The AN/SQR-19 Tactical Towed Array Sonar (TACTAS) provides very long range passive detection of enemy submarine contacts. USS GONZALEZ also has the capability to land an SH-60B LAMPS Mark III helicopter which can link to the ship to localize and attack submarines and to conduct over the horizon targeting missions.

These weapons are supplemented by the AN/SLQ-32V(2) Electronic Warfare Suite, which includes passive detection systems and decoy countermeasures.

USS GONZALEZ is powered by four quick response General Electric LM-2500 Gas Turbine Engines coupled to two controllable, reversible pitch propellers. This combination gives GONZALEZ tremendous maneuverability and a top speed in excess of 30 knots.

This guided missile destroyer has a special international distinction wherever she sails. USS GONZALEZ projects the character and perseverance of her namesake and her nation going "Beyond the Call".

We firmly believe that your presence here today will ensure us "fair winds and a following sea" in all her endeavors.