

U. S. S. SPROSTON (DD 577)
FPO San Francisco 96601

DD577/DAB: kls
5750
Ser: 107
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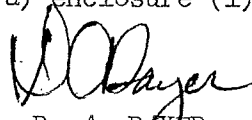
From: Commanding Officer, USS SPROSTON (DD577)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B9)

Subj: 1967 Command History; forwarding of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

Encl: (1) USS SPROSTON 1967 Command History

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


D. A. BAYER
By direction

Copy to:
COMDESDIV 112 (1)
COMDESFLOT 5 (1)
COMCRUDESAC (1)
CINCPACFLT (2)

USS SPROSTON (DD577)
SHIPS HISTORY - 1967

I. Command Organization

- A. Commanding Officer - CDR H. SCUDDER, USN
- B. Homeport - Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
- C. DESDIV 112
 DESRON 11
 DESFLOT 5
 1st Flëet
 14th Naval District
- D. Complement - 18 Officers, 210 Enlisted

II. Operations or Activities

A. Chronology of Major Events

- 6 March - Underway for Yokosuka - 1967 WESTPAC Deployment commences.
- 6 April - Joined USS TICONDEROGA (CVA-14) on Yankee Station and commenced carrier escort duty.
- 10 April - Detached and proceeding to relieve USS SUMNER (DD-692) and commence Sea Dragon Operations with USS O'BRIEN (DD-725).
- 13 April - At 0844 taken under fire by North Vietnamese shore batteries. 0847 returned fire from MT 52.
- 14 April - Rejoined USS TICONDEROGA (CVA-14) for carrier escort duty.
- 21 April - Detached to proceed to Corps 1 Area of South Vietnam to undertake gunfire support missions.

- 22 April - Commenced shore bombardment with harassing and interdiction missions off CAP SA HOI, Corps 1 Area, South Vietnam.
- 14 May - Joined USS HANCOCK (CVA-19) for escort duty.
- 16 May - Detached for trawler surveillance on Soviet ELINT ship DEFLEKTOR.
- 22 May - Detached and proceeded to join USS BAINBRIDGE (DLGN-25) and USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65).
- 23 May - Detached by CTG 77.8 for trawler surveillance on Soviet trawler BAROGRAF.
- 13 June - Commenced carrier escort duties with USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31).
- 11 July - Intercepted Soviet trawler GIDROFON for surveillance duty.
- 29 July - In response to request for aid, proceeding at flank speed to rendezvous with USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). Searched FORRESTAL's track for survivors.
- 15 August - Arrived Sydney, Australia for brief port visit.
- 21 August - Commenced two day joint ASW exercise, Operation LONGEX, off the coast of New Zealand.
- 1 September - Departed Wellington, New Zealand.
- 11 September - Arrived Pearl Harbor. 1967 WESTPAC deployment completed.

B. Narrative.

In January of 1967 USS SPROSTON was involved in local operations preparing for her 1967 WESTPAC deployment. During one such local operation, Submarine Target Vessel, SPROSTON was operating with USS TOMBIGBEE (AOG-11) and USS MC MORRIS (DE-1036). At 2240 on 31 January a collision occurred between MC MORRIS and TOMBIGBEE during reorientation of the ASW screen, resulting in heavy material and personnel injury to MC MORRIS and light damage to TOMBIGBEE. SPROSTON received the seriously injured personnel from MC MORRIS and proceeded to Pearl Harbor at best speed.

SPROSTON remained inport for the better part of February taking on the necessary material for her up coming cruise.

On 6 March SPROSTON was underway for Yokosuka, Japan, her first stop on what was to become a six month deployment.

6 April marked the beginning of SPROSTON's activities on Yankee Station. During the succeeding few months SPROSTON was involved in both Naval Gunfire Supports off the coast of the Corps 1 Area of South Vietnam, and Operation Sea Dragon in the north. During a total of twelve days of shore bombardment SPROSTON fired over 2000 rounds of ammunition from her 5"/38 guns. During one 48 hour period of shore bombardment the following casualty figures indicate the effectiveness of the ship's main batteries:

545 Rounds fired

106 Structures destroyed

48 Structures damaged

43 Viet Cong killed in action

34 Viet Cong wounded in action

- 7 Secondary fires
- 7 Medium secondary explosions
- 2 Large secondary explosions
- 6 Boats destroyed or damaged
- 1 Road damaged
- 5 Bunkers damaged
- 4 Rice caches destroyed

On 11 April SPROSTON commenced her participation in Operation Sea Dragon as she joined USS O'BRIEN (DD-725) off the coast of North Vietnam. At 0844, 13 April the ship received fire from North Vietnam shore batteries and returned their fire with 12 rounds from Mount 52.

On 14 May, having successfully completed her gunfire support and Operation Sea Dragon missions, SPROSTON proceeded to join USS HANCOCK (CVA-19) for carrier escort duty. For the next 2½ months the ship performed plane guard duty with USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31) and USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65). On the morning of 29 July, while operating with the "Bonnie Dick", SPROSTON received a call for assistance from USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59), and was detached to proceed at best speed to the vicinity of FORRESTAL to search for survivors.

In addition to her scheduled duties in Vietnam, SPROSTON was detached from carrier escort duty three times to assume trawler surveillance duties on Yankee Station. The first Soviet ELINT ship DD577 was assigned was AGI DEFLEKTOR on 16 May. Again on 23 May and 11 July SPROSTON intercepted for surveillance AGI's BAROGRAF AND GIDROFON respectively. During

each surveillance period SPROSTON used the time-on-station to increase her battle readiness through various training procedures.

SPROSTON was originally scheduled to return to her homeport of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii around the middle of August. She received a schedule change in July, however, calling for SPROSTON to extend her deployment to 11 September in exchange for a return trip via Australia and New Zealand. The purpose of SPROSTON's schedule change was to allow her participation in a joint ASW exercise with units of the New Zealand and British Navies off the coast of New Zealand.

In company with USS CARPENTER (DD-825), SPROSTON set out on 4 August for her first stop on the track to Sydney, Australia - Manus, British Admiralty Islands.

The ship arrived in Sydney, Australia on 15 August, and commenced two days of relaxation for the officers and crew. During the two day visit, United States Ambassador Clark paid an official visit to SPROSTON and CARPENTER. The following message was received from the U. S. Naval Attaché, American Embassy, Canberra, Australia on 17 August:

"Ambassador Clark expressed much pleasure with the cordial and professional treatment accorded during his visit on short notice to CARPENTER and SPROSTON during Sydney visit. Ambassador expressed particular pleasure with the weapons display and excellence of wardroom mess.

"For your information, Ambassador Clark has sent personal message to Ambassador Henning in Wellington recommending he make similar visit."

In response to Ambassador Clark's message, the following was received

from VADM John J. Hyland on 22 August:

"The fine impression you have made during your visit to Australia as received in reference (a) (Ambassador Clark message), is noted with pleasure. Well done."

On 20 August SPROSTON arrived Auckland, New Zealand for one day of briefings in preparation for Operation LONGEX, the joint American, British and New Zealand ASW exercise.

Upon the successful completion of LONGEX, SPROSTON returned to Auckland for three days of debriefing and recuperation from the strenuous three day exercise.

DD577 departed Auckland in company with CARPENTER on 26 August, and two days later steamed into the picturesque harbor of New Zealand's capital - Wellington. On the 31st, the day before SPROSTON's departure on her long journey back to Pearl, the following message was received from the New Zealand Naval Board:

"Your participation in LONGEX was most welcome and your enthusiastic cooperation much appreciated.

"The New Zealand Naval Board wishes you a fair return voyage with pleasant memories of your visit."

At 0800, 1 September, SPROSTON set out on the last leg of a very active and successful WESTPAC deployment. During the six months of SPROSTON's deployment, she was underway 3 out of every 4 days, steamed nearly 40,000 miles and participated in virtually every mission to which destroyers have been assigned off the coast of Vietnam. Ports visited during the deployment were Yokosuka, Japan; Subic Bay, P.I.; Kaohsiung, Taiwan; Hong Kong, B.C.C.;

Sydney, Australia; Auckland and Wellington, New Zealand.

On 11 September SPROSTON steamed into Pearl Harbor and commenced nearly four weeks inport time which was occupied by general upkeep for the ship, and leave for many of the crew.

SPROSTON was underway 9 October for local operations which continued for four weeks. This period of local operations included operational testing of the MK 46 Torpedo.

1 December found SPROSTON inport in Pearl Harbor to finish out 1967 with four weeks of preparation for SPROSTON's scheduled RAV in Guam.