



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

USS KITTY HAWK (CV-63)  
FPO AP 98634-2770

IN REPLY REFER TO  
5700  
PAO  
18 Mar 05

From: Commanding Officer, USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63)  
To: Director of Naval History, Office of the Chief of  
Naval Operations (OP-09BH), Washington, D.C.  
20350-2000

Subj: USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63) COMMAND HISTORY FOR  
CALENDAR YEAR 2004

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Chronology  
(3) Narrative  
(4) Supporting Documents  
1. Welcome aboard brochure  
2. Biography of commanding officer

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are forwarded.

2. KITTY HAWK news clips and CDs of photographs and press releases are being sent under separate cover, as they would be extremely large files and cannot be sent electronically.

T. A. PARKER

Copy to:  
COMNAVAIRFORCES

### Command Composition and Organization

1. Short title/UIC. USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63)/03363
2. Mission. USS Kitty Hawk is America's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier, operating out of Yokosuka, Japan. It's operational mission is power projection and control of the sea lanes in support of U.S. national policy.
3. Organizational Structure.
  - a. Immediate Operational Senior in Command: COMSTIKEGRU FIVE; Battle Force Seventh Fleet; Commander Task Force 70.
  - b. Immediate Administrative Senior in Command: COMNAVAIRPAC
4. Commanding Officer. Capt. T. Parker, 1 Jan. 2004 – 31 Dec. 2004.
5. Type and number of aircraft assigned:

#### Carrier Air Wing FIVE Atsugi, Japan

HS-14	SH-60F
HSL-51 Det.	SH-60B
VAQ-136	EA-6B
VAW-115	E-2C
VFA-102	F/A-18F Super Hornet
VFA-192	F-18C
VFA-195	F/A-18C
VFA-27	F/A-18E
VRC-30	C-2A Greyhound aircraft
VS-21	S-3B (Decommissioned November 2004)

## **USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63)**

### **2004 Chronology**

#### **Feb. 18, 2004**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), the Navy's only permanently forward deployed aircraft carrier, departed Yokosuka, Japan, for its spring underway period today, with nearly 5,000 Sailors from the ship and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 aboard.

#### **Feb. 19, 2004**

A new chapter in the book of Kitty Hawk Strike Group's history began February 19, 2004, with the first landing of an F/A-18F Super Hornet on board USS Kitty Hawk's (CV 63) 4.1-acre flight deck. The VFA-102 "Diamondbacks" introduced the improved F/A-18 E/F "Super Hornet" to the 7th Fleet area of operation, and replaces the F-14 Tomcat, which is being phased out by the Super Hornet after more than 30 years of service.

#### **Feb. 26, 2004**

The Honorable Gordon R. England, Secretary of the Navy, flew aboard USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) to personally thank Sailors from the Kitty Hawk Strike Group for their service to the United States.

"I'm here to say thank you for being part of an over 200-year-old tradition of defending America," said England, addressing the Hawk-Five team in the ship's hanger bay.

In his address, England talked about the Battle Cat's role as the Navy's only permanently forward deployed aircraft carrier.

"The Asia-Pacific region is critically important to America and the world," said England, citing the U.S.-Japan friendship as vital in a world where terrorists are seeking to destabilize free societies.

During his visit to USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) Feb. 26, the Honorable Gordon R. England, Secretary of the Navy, took time in his speech in the ship's hangar bay to honor two Kitty Hawk Sailors who helped rescue a shipmate who had fallen overboard.

#### **Feb 28**

Kitty Hawk completed its annual missile exercise (MISSELEX) this morning. The missile shoot is an opportunity for the Battle Cat to test its NSSMS, to insure that it works properly. MISSELEX provides a chance to train Kitty Hawk's crew on using the system, explained Hook. By testing the system and training the crew the exercise helps insure that Kitty Hawk is at maximum readiness.

Additionally, the 14-member, combined 3M Assist Team from Commander, Naval Air Forces Atlantic and Pacific began a visit to analyze the state of Kitty Hawk's program and train the crew on ways to improve it.

**Feb. 29, 2004**

Kitty Hawk's Armory Division conducted a "Killer Tomato" drill.

**March 1, 2004**

Today, aviation ordnancemen (AO) from USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) and the rest of the Navy celebrate the 78th anniversary of the founding of their rating.

The AO rating was established for the four petty officer grades of chief, first class, second class, and third class on March 2, 1926, as a rating within the Navy's aviation branch. It was initially filled with qualified personnel serving in the gunner's mate and torpedoman ratings.

**March 6, 2004**

The USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) Strike Group pulled into port today, March 6, returning to Hong Kong more than 15 months since their last visit of November 2002.

During USS Kitty Hawk's (CV 63) Hong Kong port visit, March 8, 2004, Sailors from the Battle Cat-5 team enjoyed the scenery while making time to give back to the community.

Once again, Kitty Hawk and Carrier Air Wing-5 Sailors, volunteered their time to help non-profit charity organizations in the Hong Kong community.

Salvation Army, Ronald McDonald House, and Cross Roads International were among the organizations that received help from the Battle Cat-5 team.

**March 15**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), which last made an appearance in Korea in November of 2000, moored pier side in Busan for a 5-day working port visit.

Despite it being a working port, Sailors still made the best of their time off. While downtown Busan offered a wide variety of shopping, other activities were available to Sailors in support of enhancing the visit to Korea.

Kitty Hawk's Morale, Welfare and Recreation division organized tours and the Chaplin's office arranged a community relations project.

Korean mink blankets, clothing and shoes seemed to be among the popular purchases made by Sailors while in Korea. However, the highlight of Garcia's port visit was going on the MWR sponsored tour to Kyongju.

**March 19.**

After five days in Pusan, Korea, USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) pulled out of port, and for many Battle Cat Sailors, the visit was filled with great shopping and chances to help others.

For Kitty Hawk's morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) division, which coordinated tours and transportation for the crew, the Pusan visit was particularly eventful. During the

visit to Pusan, some Sailors participated in a community relations project at a local sanitarium for the elderly and handicapped children.

#### **April 3, 2004**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) pulls into port here today, returning to Singapore for the first time since 2002.

Over 5,000 Sailors from Kitty Hawk and the embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 enjoyed liberty in Singapore and surrounding areas, and boosted the local economy by spending hundreds of thousands of dollars during the visit.

#### **April 7, 2004**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) departed Singapore after four days in port, and some Battle Cat and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 Sailors said they enjoyed their time ashore.

Some Kitty Hawk Sailors also spent their free time in Singapore helping out in a community relations project at the Yio Chu Kang job development and training center, which helps handicapped adults, coordinated by the chaplain's office.

The staff at the center received much needed help from the Battle Cat Sailors, said Locklear.

#### **April 12, 2004**

After completing TSTA I in March, Kitty Hawk began TSTA II April 12. TSTA II lasted until Kitty Hawk pulled into Perth, Australia.

#### **April 20, 2004**

**Kitty Hawk Pulls into Australia.** More than 5,000 Sailors assigned to the Kitty Hawk Strike Group departed the port of Fremantle, Australia, April 27, after a five-day visit, with some USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 Sailors describing the visit as one of the most enjoyable in recent Kitty Hawk history. The strike group arrived in Fremantle April 22 for a scheduled port visit while conducting her spring cruise. The visit included a short rest and relaxation (R&R) break, routine voyage maintenance and administrative activities. Kitty Hawk's brief stay in the Perth and Fremantle areas provided Sailors with the chance to sightsee, shop and enjoy the many activities Western Australia has to offer.

During USS Kitty Hawk's (CV 63) recent visit to Australia, some Sailors used their free time April 26 to help young Australian naval cadets clean their "ship."

The Training Ship (TS) Canning, which is located outside the port city of Fremantle, is a building used by members of the Australia Navy Cadets program that simulates a real Royal Australian Navy ship. Thirteen Kitty Hawk Sailors helped Canning's "crew" clean up their vessel during a community relations project (COMREL) sponsored by Kitty Hawk's chaplain department. About 30 cadets, ages 12 to 19, train on Canning, which is one of 96 Royal Navy training ships throughout Australia, according to Carlson. These ships, sponsored by the Royal Australian Navy, are designed to give young Australians a taste of Navy life if they are considering joining the Navy.

**April 28, 2004**

The crew of USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) conducted a maintenance and material management, or 3M, self-assessment last week to prepare for COMNAVAIRFOR 3M Assessment.

The assessment began April 28th and evaluated Kitty Hawk's planned maintenance system (PMS) and material data sheet (MDS) programs and gives a reference point for how ready the Battle Cat is for the inspection.

**April 29**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), currently the Navy's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier, turned 43 years old April 29, with an underway cake-cutting ceremony to celebrate the beginning of another year in the life of America's oldest active Navy ship.

**May 4, 2004**

Tuesday, May 4, USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) held its Wog Day festivities, and some Battle Cat and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 leaders and junior Sailors described the day a fun and successful demonstration of the traditional Navy objectives of training, teamwork, and transformation.

Wog Day commemorates a Navy ship's crossing of the equator, with Sailors who have never crossed the line before, called "pollywogs," or wogs, going through rituals to prove they are worthy of becoming "glorious shellbacks.

**May 6, 2004**

As the Kitty Hawk Strike Group steams through the ocean, it says a temporary goodbye to one of its components, Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 27. The pilots of VFA-27 are flying off USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) on May 7, to begin a transition process that will end with them flying a new plane. VFA-27, or the Flying Maces, are leaving USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) early to begin a transition from the F/A-18 Hornet, to the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet.

**May 11, 2004**

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced May 11, that President George W. Bush had made nominations for the promotion of Navy flag officers, including one who is familiar to USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 Sailors.

Rear Adm. (lower half) James D. Kelly, commander of Carrier Group Five, which includes Kitty Hawk, has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (upper half).

**May 12, 2004**

Each year, Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific (CNAP) awards the Battle Efficiency award, commonly referred to as the Battle "E", to departments and squadrons that demonstrate the best combat readiness in the Pacific Fleet. This year, both USS Kitty

Hawk (CV 63) and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 have good reason to be proud, as several departments from the ship and squadrons from the air wing took home the coveted prize. Kitty Hawk's combat systems, deck, medical, navigation, and engineering departments won the Battle E. Engineering took home two Battle E's, one for its damage control and one for its conventional engineering sections.

**May 14, 2004**

USS Kitty Hawk's (CV 63) deck, navigation, and engineering departments conducted an anchor drop test, aiming to see how precise they could be when it comes to dropping one of the two 60,000-pound anchors aboard the ship into the water. Deck department's first division controlled the anchor drop from Kitty Hawk's foc'sle, with important help coming from navigation and engineering.

**May 24, 2004**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) returned May 24 to her permanently forward-deployed operating port of Yokosuka, Japan, for the first time since she began her Spring deployment Feb. 18. During her three-month underway period, Kitty Hawk toured the 7th Fleet area of responsibility, visiting and interacting with her neighbors, and demonstrating America's commitment to maintaining regional stability and good relationships. Throughout the underway period, extensive flight operations were conducted with embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5.

**June 10, 2004**

The graduating class of Nile C. Kinnick High School of Fleet Activities Yokosuka held its graduation ceremony on the flight deck of USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) June 10, a first-time for this to happen aboard this symbol of tradition and family pride for many of the 96 students who received their diplomas at the ceremony.

**July 9, 2004**

Connie K. DeWitte, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Safety, visited Sailors and toured USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) July 9. DeWitte arrived on America's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier to meet with Safety leaders and see how Sailors live and work on board.

**July 19, 2004**

Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 and USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) Sailors again joined forces and departed today for Summer Pulse 2004 after a two-month in-port period.

Summer Pulse 2004 is the first exercise of the Navy's new Fleet Response Plan in which seven aircraft carrier strike groups (CSG) will deploy simultaneously to different areas of the world. The intent is to demonstrate the Navy's ability to provide credible combat power across the globe at a moment's notice by operating in five theaters with other U.S., allied, and coalition military forces.

**July 27, 2004**

While under way for Summer Pulse '04, USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) successfully completed a Maintenance and Material Management (3M) assessment with a grade of 95 percent.

#### **July 29, 2004**

Nine personnel from Carrier Air Wing (CVNW) Detachment 0287, a reserve unit stationed in San Jose, Calif., came aboard Kitty Hawk before the start of its 2004 summer underway period to help out in various departments aboard the ship. According to some of the reservists, supporting Kitty Hawk's regular crew is a worthwhile job.

TSTA III took place in August, after which ATG will report on the Battle Cat's readiness be determined whether or not Kitty Hawk is ready to deploy.

#### **August 8, 2004**

The Navy Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs) led by USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) and USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) began participating in the training exercise, Joint Air and Sea Exercises (JASEX) 04, August 8. JASEX provides a way for the United States to demonstrate its commitment to peace and stability in the western Pacific Ocean in a joint training environment.

#### **August 19, 2004**

More than 5,000 Sailors on board USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) along with elements of the Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Group (CSG) pulled in to Apra Harbor this morning for a scheduled port visit during the ship's Spring underway period.

While taking liberty in this tropical paradise, Sailors will have ample opportunity to rest, relax and take advantage of the world-famous hospitality offered by Guam. Many of the Sailors are expected to take-in the island's scenic attractions and provide a significant boost the local economy through the purchase of various goods and services.

#### **August 21, 2004**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) returned to sea in the western Pacific Ocean Aug. 21, following an abbreviated port visit to Guam.

Having arrived Aug. 19, Kitty Hawk had initially been scheduled to stay in Guam for several days, but was forced to depart the island early due to the approach of Super Typhoon Chaba (Super Typhoon 19W), which took a turn directly toward the island.

Kitty Hawk's commanding officer, Capt. Thomas A. Parker, initiated an emergency recall of personnel late morning Aug. 21. All Sailors and airmen assigned to Kitty Hawk and the embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 were ordered to return to the ship and make preparations for immediate departure.

Although the port visit was cut short due to Super Typhoon Chaba taking a turn toward the island, 15 air wing Sailors participated in a community service project Aug. 21 at the Habitat for Humanity center in the town of Beno. They helped the regular Habitat



volunteers bring furniture and other supplies to houses being built for those who cannot afford homes of their own.

**August 24, 2004**

The oceanographer of the Navy and former USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) commanding officer, Rear Adm. Steven Tomaszeski, came back to visit Kitty Hawk Aug. 24 at sea in the western Pacific Ocean.

Tomaszeski, whose formal title is Director, Space Information Warfare, Command and Control Division, flew to Kitty Hawk from Guam in the midst of Super Typhoon Chaba to talk with Sailors who work in meteorology and oceanography positions aboard the ship.

Tomaszeski was visiting various meteorology shops worldwide to see how technology is being implemented to help the war-fighter. He spent the majority of his time aboard Kitty Hawk talking with aerographers to get a feel for how they view their role aboard ship.

**August 30, 2004**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) proved their supply department was second to none when the ship passed a recent Supply Management Inspection (SMI) Aug. 30 with flying colors.

Every 18 months, Kitty Hawk's supply department goes through a detailed supply management inspection (SMI), in which a team of inspectors check to see if the supply department is up to standards in all areas of responsibility.

The SMI team, from Naval Air Forces Pacific in San Diego, visited the ship Aug. 27-30 to inspect all 13 supply divisions to make sure food and stock materials were completely accounted for, and matched the supply department's authorized allowance quantity.

**Sept. 16, 2004**

Coming on the heels of its recent summer underway period, USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) began a five-month Ship's Restricted Availability (SRA) Sept. 16, a period which will result in many changes for the ship and its crew, and enable the fleet to maintain high levels of readiness under the Navy's Fleet Response Plan.

Differing from last year's Dry-docking Ship's Restricted Availability (DSRA), this time most of the work will be done on the interior of the ship, said Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AW) John Damiano, maintenance department's liaison to Ship Repair Facility (SRF) at Fleet Activities Yokosuka, which will assist Kitty Hawk Sailors during SRA.

**Sept. 16, 2004**

Under the proud eyes of friends, family, co-workers and mentors, 23 USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) chief selectees completed their transformation to chief petty officers Sept. 16 in a pinning ceremony held at the Fleet Activities Yokosuka auditorium.

The ceremony kicked off with the chief selectees marching into the auditorium. The selectees sang the National Anthem during the presenting of the colors.

For some of the new chiefs, the ceremony, which is steeped Navy in tradition, was an emotional experience.

**Sept. 17, 2004**

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) Sailors took time Sept. 17, to celebrate their return to Yokosuka with a command picnic at Fleet Activities Yokosuka's sea wall park.

Preparing for a command picnic normally takes a significant amount of time. As America's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier, Kitty Hawk's crew is accustomed to carrying out difficult missions in a relatively short amount of time, and they were able to plan, prepare and partake in the command picnic in a quarter of the time.

**Nov. 4, 2004**

The crew of USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) mourned the loss of one of its fellow Sailors during a memorial ceremony.

Aviation Electronics Technician 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jose L. Gonzales was pronounced dead at Naval Hospital Yokosuka at 10:23 p.m. local time Nov. 1. Gonzales had collapsed earlier in the day while in his work center aboard the conventionally powered aircraft carrier and was rushed to Naval Hospital Yokosuka where doctors treated him for a life threatening medical condition.

**November 6, 2004**

Every year, Nile C. Kinnick High School at Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan, holds a homecoming parade to help kick off its homecoming football game. The theme, "Honoring Those Who Serve," chosen for this year's parade, held Nov. 5, hit close to home for many Kinnick students.

The 2004 homecoming parade honored the people who serve the Yokosuka community, whether they are Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, or military police and firemen.

Because of its theme, the parade featured numerous Yokosuka military personnel, including 50 Sailors from USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), military policemen and a fire truck from the base fire department. Capt. Thomas Parker, Kitty Hawk's commanding officer, was selected as this year's grand marshal.

**December 31, 2004**

Aboard USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), the combat systems department is in charge of some of the most important aspects of the ship's operation. Kitty Hawk's combat systems department recently proved it was up to this task by performing well on a vital assessment.

From Dec. 6 to Dec. 15, the department underwent an annual readiness assessment of its combat systems suite (C5RA). The assessment is sponsored by Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific, and conducted by Regional Maintenance Center, Japan.

Unlike other assessments, during the C5RA the department is not given an overall score for performance. Instead, it is graded on its ability to find discrepancies and correct them, said Kitty Hawk's combat systems officer, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Rankin.

For the duration of the assessment, members of the evaluating team observe combat systems procedures and personnel as they go about their daily routines. Along the way, they note tasks that are being completed properly and areas where the department could use some improvement.

## **USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63)**

### **2004 Command History Narrative**

2004 was an eventful year that involved a series of inspections, exercises, and port visits for the world's only forward deployed aircraft carrier.

The oldest active ship in the U.S. Navy began its 2004 underway schedule when she departed Yokosuka, Japan, for its spring underway period Feb. 18, 2004, with nearly 5,300 Sailors from the ship and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 aboard. Prior to this, Sailors spent time with their families over the holidays and prepared the ship for another underway period.

On Feb. 19, a new chapter in the book of Kitty Hawk Strike Group's history began with the first landing of an F/A-18F Super Hornet on board Kitty Hawk's 4.1-acre flight deck. The VFA-102 "Diamondbacks" introduced the improved F/A-18 E/F "Super Hornet" to the 7th Fleet area of operation, and replaces the F-14 Tomcat, which is being phased out and replaced by the Super Hornet after more than 30 years of service.

Shortly after the thrill of receiving the Super Hornets, Kitty Hawk was graced with a visit from the Honorable Gordon R. England, Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV), who flew aboard Kitty Hawk Feb. 26, to personally thank Sailors from the Kitty Hawk Strike Group for their service to the United States.

During his visit, Gordon addressed the crew, stating, "I'm here to say thank you for being part of an over 200-year-old tradition of defending America."

Additionally, in his address, England talked about the Battle Cat's role as the Navy's only permanently forward deployed aircraft carrier.

"The Asia-Pacific region is critically important to America and the world," said England, citing the U.S.-Japan friendship as vital in a world where terrorists are seeking to destabilize free societies.

After the kind words from the SECNAV it was time to get to the training that keeps Kitty Hawk as America's premier carrier by completing its annual missile exercise (MISSELEX) Feb. 28. The missile shoot was an opportunity for the Battle Cat to test its NSSMS, to insure that it works properly. MISSELEX provides a chance to train Kitty Hawk's crew on using the system. By testing the system and training the crew the exercise helps ensure that Kitty Hawk remains at maximum readiness.

Additionally, on that day, the 14-member, combined 3M Assist Team from Commander, Naval Air Forces Atlantic and Pacific began a visit to analyze the state of Kitty Hawk's program and train the crew on ways to improve it.

Being that it 2004 was a leap-year, it offered Kitty Hawk an extra day to conduct training which was unitized for gunners mates of Kitty Hawk's armory division to conduct a "Killer Tomato" drill, where they shot an inflated object, which resembles a huge tomato, with .50-caliber machine guns in order to practice their skills.

Kitty Hawk's aviation ordnancemen (AO) and the rest of the Navy celebrated the 78th anniversary of the founding of their rating, March 1.

The AO rating was established for the four petty officer grades of chief, first class, second class, and third class on March 2, 1926, as a rating within the Navy's aviation branch. It was initially filled with qualified personnel serving in the gunner's mate and torpedoman ratings.

After the first leg of their underway period, the Kitty Hawk (CV 63) Strike Group pulled into port March 6, returning to Hong Kong more than 15 months since their last visit of November 2002.

During Kitty Hawk's Hong Kong port visit, Sailors from the Battle Cat-5 team enjoyed the scenery while making time to give back to the community by volunteering their time to help non-profit charity organizations in the Hong Kong community.

Salvation Army, Ronald McDonald House, and Cross Roads International were among the organizations that received help from the Battle Cat-5 team.

Shortly after leaving Hong Kong, Kitty Hawk which last made an appearance in Korea in November of 2000, moored pier side in Busan, Republic of Korea, for a 5-day working port visit.

Despite it being a working port, Sailors still made the best of their time off. While downtown Busan offered a wide variety of shopping, other activities were available to Sailors in support of enhancing the visit to Korea. Imitation-mink blankets, clothing and shoes seemed to be among the popular purchases made by Sailors while in Korea.

Prior to pulling into Busan, Kitty Hawk's Morale, Welfare and Recreation division organized tours and transportation for the crew and the Chaplain's office arranged a community service project at a local sanitarium for the elderly and handicapped children.

After five days in Busan, Korea, it was time to get back to work at sea as Kitty Hawk pulled out of port March 19.

After continuing more valuable mission readiness training, Kitty Hawk pulled into port April 3, this time returning to Singapore for the first time since 2002.

Kitty Hawk and embarked CVW-5 Sailors enjoyed liberty in Singapore and surrounding areas, and boosted the local economy by spending hundreds of thousands of dollars

during the visit. Some Kitty Hawk Sailors spent their free time in Singapore helping out in a community service project at the Yio Chu Kang job development and training center, which helps handicapped adults.

After enjoying Singapore, the crew of Kitty Hawk departed April 7 after four days in port.

Gain at sea, after completing Tailored Ship's Training Assessment (TSTA) I in March, Kitty Hawk began TSTA II April 12.

As April continued. The Kitty Hawk Strike Group pulled into the port of Fremantle, Australia, April 22. Some Kitty Hawk and CVW 5 Sailors described the visit as one of the most enjoyable in recent Kitty Hawk history. The visit included a short rest and relaxation (R&R) break, routine voyage maintenance and administrative activities. Kitty Hawk's brief stay in the Perth and Fremantle areas provided Sailors with the chance to sightsee, shop and enjoy the many activities Western Australia has to offer.

In addition to taking time to relax, some Sailors used their free time April 26 to help young Australian naval cadets clean their "ship." The Training Ship (TS) Canning, which is located outside the port city of Fremantle, is a building used by members of the Australia Navy Cadets program that simulates a real Royal Australian Navy ship. Thirteen Kitty Hawk Sailors helped Canning's "crew" clean up their vessel during a community relations project (COMREL) sponsored by Kitty Hawk's chaplain department. About 30 cadets, ages 12 to 19, train on Canning, which is one of 96 Royal Navy training ships throughout Australia. These ships, sponsored by the Royal Australian Navy, are designed to give young Australians a taste of Navy life if they are considering joining the Navy.

After a five-day visit, Kitty Hawk departed the port of Fremantle, Australia, April 27.

Once back at sea, the crew of USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) conducted a maintenance and material management, or 3M, self-assessment last week to prepare for Commander, Naval Air Forces 3M Assessment April 28.

The assessment evaluated Kitty Hawk's planned maintenance system (PMS) and material data sheet (MDS) programs and gives a reference point for how ready the Battle Cat is for the inspection.

Kitty Hawk celebrated turning 43 years old April 29, with an underway cake-cutting ceremony to celebrate the beginning of another year in the life of America's oldest active Navy ship.

Sensing a need to "cleans" the ship, Tuesday, May 4, Kitty Hawk held its Wog Day festivities, and some Battle Cat and CVW-5 leaders and junior Sailors described the day a fun and successful demonstration of the traditional Navy objectives of training, teamwork, and transformation.

Wog Day commemorates a Navy ship's crossing of the equator, with Sailors who have never crossed the line before, called "pollywogs," or slimy wogs, going through rituals to prove they are worthy of becoming "glorious and trusty shellbacks."

While steaming through the ocean, the Kitty Hawk Strike Group said a temporary goodbye to one of its components, Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 27. The pilots of VFA-27 flew off USS Kitty Hawk on May 7, and began a transition process that will later end with them flying a new plane. VFA-27, the Royal Maces, left Kitty Hawk early to transition from the F/A-18 Hornet, to the F/A-18E one-seat Super Hornet.

Good news then came May 11 for Rear Adm. (lower half) James D. ("Jamie") Kelly, commander of Carrier Group Five, the Kitty Hawk Strike Group, when it was announced from the Pentagon that he was nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (upper half). Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced May 11, that President George W. Bush had made nominations for the promotion of Navy flag officers, which included Kelly.

Following on the heels of Kelly's appointment announcement, Kitty Hawk's combat systems, deck, medical, navigation, and engineering departments were announced as having won the Battle Efficiency award (Battle "E"), May 12. Engineering took home two Battle "E's", one for its damage control and one for its conventional engineering sections.

Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific, awards the Battle "E", to departments and squadrons that demonstrate the best combat readiness in the Pacific Fleet.

Operations continued in May as deck, navigation, and engineering departments conducted an anchor drop test, aiming to see how precise they could be when it comes to dropping one of the two 60,000-pound anchors aboard the ship into the water May 14. Deck department's first division controlled the anchor drop from Kitty Hawk's foc'sle, with important help coming from navigation and engineering.

Concluding her current underway period, Kitty Hawk returned May 24 to her forward-deployed operating port of Yokosuka, Japan, for the first time since she departed Feb. 18. Throughout the underway period, extensive flight operations were conducted with embarked CVW 5.

After being in port for a few short weeks, the flight deck of Kitty Hawk became the site for the graduation ceremony of the graduating class of Nile C. Kinnick High School of Fleet Activities Yokosuka on June 10. This was this first-time for such an event, with more than 1,000 family and friends in attendance. This event was symbol of tradition and family pride for many of the 96 students who received their diplomas at the ceremony.

Almost a month after the prestige of hosting the graduation ceremony, Connie K. DeWitte, deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for safety, visited Sailors and toured USS Kitty Hawk July 9. DeWitte arrived on America's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier to meet with safety leaders and see how Sailors live and work on board.

CVW-5 and Kitty Hawk Sailors again joined forces and departed July 19, for Summer Pulse 2004 after a two-month in-port period. In addition to CVW-5 and Kitty Hawk Sailors, nine personnel from Carrier Air Wing (CVNW) Detachment 0287, a reserve unit stationed in San Jose, Calif. joined the ship to help support various departments aboard the ship.

Summer Pulse 2004 was the first operational test of the Navy's new Fleet Response Plan in which seven aircraft carrier strike groups (CSG) deployed simultaneously to different areas of the world. The intent was to demonstrate the Navy's ability to provide credible combat power across the globe at a moment's notice by operating in five theaters with other U.S., allied, and coalition military forces.

While under way for Summer Pulse '04, Kitty Hawk successfully completed a Maintenance and Material Management (3M) assessment, July 27 with a grade of 95 percent. This was the highest grade the inspection team had ever seen for any aircraft carrier.

As Summer Pulse '04 continued, so did training. USS Kitty Hawk and USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs) began participating in the training exercise, Joint Air and Sea Exercises (JASEX) 04, August 8. JASEX provided a way for the United States to demonstrate its commitment to peace and stability in the western Pacific Ocean in a joint training environment.

Kitty Hawk then completed Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) Phase III and Final Evaluation Period (FEP) on Aug. 15. The nine-day evolution trained the crew in critical damage control exercises. The ship scored 377 out of 400 – better than any other carrier under the FEP scoring system.

After finishing JASEX, TSTA III, FEP, and enduring several typhoons in the region, Kitty Hawk, along with elements of the Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Group (CSG), pulled in to Guam's Apra Harbor Aug. 19, for a scheduled port visit during the ship's Spring underway period.

While taking liberty in the tropical paradise, Sailors had an opportunity to rest, relax and take advantage of the world-famous hospitality offered by Guam. Many of the Sailors took-in the island's scenic attractions and provided a significant boost the local economy through the purchase of various goods and services.

Albeit Sailors were enjoying the island of Guam, Kitty Hawk needed to depart the island early, returning to sea in the western Pacific Ocean Aug. 21, due to the approach of Super Typhoon Chaba (Super Typhoon 19W), which took a turn directly toward the island.



Kitty Hawk had initially been scheduled to stay in Guam for several days.

Kitty Hawk's commanding officer, Capt. Thomas A. Parker, initiated an emergency recall of personnel in the late morning of Aug. 21. All Sailors and airmen assigned to Kitty Hawk and the embarked CVW-5 were ordered to return to the ship and make preparations for immediate departure.

Although the port visit was cut short due to Super Typhoon Chaba taking a turn toward the island, 15 air wing Sailors participated in a community service project Aug. 21 at the Habitat for Humanity center in the town of Beno. They helped the regular Habitat volunteers bring furniture and other supplies to houses being built for those who cannot afford homes of their own.

A few days after departing Guam, the oceanographer of the Navy and former Kitty Hawk commanding officer, Rear Adm. Steven Tomaszeski, came back to visit Kitty Hawk Aug. 24 while at sea.

Tomaszeski, whose formal title is director, Space Information Warfare, Command and Control Division, flew to Kitty Hawk from Guam in the midst of Super Typhoon Chaba to talk with Sailors who work in meteorology and oceanography positions aboard the ship.

Tomaszeski was visiting various meteorology shops worldwide to see how technology is being implemented to help the war-fighter. He spent the majority of his time aboard Kitty Hawk talking with aerographers to get a feel for how they view their role aboard ship.

In keeping with the track record of sailing through inspections, Kitty Hawk proved their supply department was second to none when the ship passed the Supply Management Inspection (SMI) Aug. 30 with flying colors.

Every 18 months, Kitty Hawk's supply department goes through a detailed supply management inspection (SMI), in which a team of inspectors check to see if the supply department is up to standards in all areas of responsibility.

The SMI team, from Naval Air Forces Pacific in San Diego, visited the ship Aug. 27-30 to inspect all 13 supply divisions to make sure food and stock materials were completely accounted for, and matched the supply department's authorized allowance quantity.

Kitty Hawk returned to her forward-deployed port of Yokosuka, Japan, Sept. 7, after 48 days under way in support of Summer Pulse '04, and routine readiness training.

Coming on the heels of its summer underway period, Kitty Hawk began a five-month Ship's Restricted Availability (SRA) Sept. 16, a period which resulted in many changes

for the ship and its crew, and enabled the fleet to maintain high levels of readiness under the Navy's Fleet Response Plan.

Differing from 2003's Dry-docking Ship's Restricted Availability (DSRA), this time most of the work was done on the interior of the ship. During SRA, the ship's crew performed essential repairs impossible to complete while Kitty Hawk was at sea. Rehabilitation of berthing spaces was completed to enhance quality of life of Sailors living aboard the ship. While living quarters were being improved, engineering department conducted extensive work in main engineering spaces and replaced significant portions of the ship's ventilation system. In addition, Sailors applied 7,600 square feet of polymeric deck covering (PRC), which allows for easier maintenance and cleaning than standard tile floors.

While changes were being made to the interior of the ship, some Kitty Hawk Sailors experienced personal changes as well.

Under the proud eyes of friends, family, co-workers and mentors, 23 USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) chief selectees completed their transformation to chief petty officers Sept. 16 in a pinning ceremony held at the Fleet Activities Yokosuka auditorium. The ceremony kicked off with the chief selectees marching into the auditorium. The selectees sang the National Anthem during the presenting of the colors. For some of the new chiefs, the ceremony, which is steeped Navy in tradition, was an emotional experience.

Though SRA had officially begun, Kitty Hawk Sailors took time Sept. 17, to celebrate their return to Yokosuka with a command picnic at Fleet Activities Yokosuka's sea wall park. Preparing for a command picnic normally takes a significant amount of time. As America's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, Kitty Hawk's crew is accustomed to carrying out difficult missions in a relatively short amount of time, and they were able to plan, prepare and partake in the command picnic in a quarter of the time.

Though there were quite a few things the crew of Kitty Hawk celebrated throughout the year, there were some unfortunate events, as the crew of Kitty Hawk mourned the loss of one of its fellow Sailors during a memorial ceremony. Aviation Electronics Technician 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jose L. Gonzales died at Naval Hospital Yokosuka Nov. 1. Gonzales had collapsed earlier in the day while in his work center aboard the conventionally powered aircraft carrier and was rushed to Naval Hospital Yokosuka where doctors treated him for a life threatening medical condition.

As November continued, so did base activities. Every year, Nile C. Kinnick High School at Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan, holds a homecoming parade to help kick off its homecoming football game. The theme, "Honoring Those Who Serve," chosen for 2004's parade, held Nov. 5, hit close to home for many Kinnick students. The 2004 homecoming parade honored the people who serve the Yokosuka community, whether they were Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, or military police or firemen.

Because of its theme, the parade featured numerous Yokosuka military personnel, including 50 Sailors from Kitty Hawk, military policemen and a fire truck from the base fire department. Capt. Thomas Parker, Kitty Hawk's commanding officer, was selected as this year's grand marshal.

The last month of the year continued just as the rest of 2004 had as Kitty Hawk's combat systems department proved it was up to this task by performing well on a vital assessment.

From Dec. 6 to Dec. 15, the department underwent an annual readiness assessment of its combat systems suite (C5RA). The assessment is sponsored by Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific, and conducted by Regional Maintenance Center, Japan. Unlike other assessments, during the C5RA the department was not given an overall score for performance. Instead, it was graded on its ability to find discrepancies and correct them.

For the duration of the assessment, members of the evaluating team observed combat systems procedures and personnel as they go about their daily routines. Along the way, they noted tasks that were being completed properly and areas where the department could use some improvement. The assessors said the ship's weapons systems were some of the best-maintained they have ever seen.

With the calendar year winding down, hundreds of years of naval tradition were played out Dec. 19 as a baby was baptized aboard Kitty Hawk. Ellen Renee Bernard was baptized by the command chaplain, Cmdr. Michael Schutz, using the ship's bell.

December continued as a busy in-port month, with much work to do even during the holidays. It was again time to "light off," which is the physical act of igniting the fires which power the ship's boilers. But before that could take place, the LOA, or Light-Off Assessment, needed to take place.

Kitty Hawk again aced another key inspection, the LOA, ensuring that the ship and crew were ready to properly and safely conduct vital mission operations. The assessment team also observed the ship's damage control team and their ability to respond to main-space fires. Kitty Hawk passed this part of the assessment on the first day of the LOA, setting a new standard. According to the LOA assessment team, this was the first time they remember an aircraft carrier passing the fire drill so quickly and accurately.

The Battle Cat's 43<sup>rd</sup> year of life was full of tests that the crew took on and passed one by one. After underway periods, exercises, maintenance and upgrades during SRA, a multitude of inspections and reviews like TSTA, FEP, SMI and others, Kitty Hawk begins 2005 in an unprecedented state of readiness, prepared for the challenges of the Global War On Terrorism and the responsibilities that come with being America's only forward deployed carrier.

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