

USS LYNDE MC CORMICK (DDG-8)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif. 96601

1 March 1972

Dear Families and Friends,

LYNDE MC CORMICK departed Subic Bay, R. P. 26 February to begin the 7500 mile journey back to her home port of San Diego. We will be making fuel stops on the islands of Guam, Midway, and at Pearl Harbor. I am taking this opportunity to bring you up to date on the activities of the ship and crew during the past few months.

On 1 December LYNDE MC CORMICK slipped gracefully from her berth at Subic Bay and once again headed for waters off the coast of South Vietnam. Our mission was to provide naval gunfire support for American advisors and South Vietnam Infantry along the southwest coast of the country. A ship on the gunline is never at rest. If we were not firing a mission we were making a high speed transit to meet a replenishment ship to receive much needed fuel oil and ammunition.

During our tour on the gunline, MC CORMICK's two 5"/54 gun mounts fired a total of 1342 rounds of ammunition. Great credit must be given to the professionals who made this a successful period. A very special and brilliant showing of dedication to duty was shown by Gunner's Mates Third Class ACRES and BETTS when a gun mount casualty forced them to load manually and fire 220 rounds of ammunition in less than one hour.

We left the gunline on 15 December and proceeded to the Tonkin Gulf for a four day period on the North Search and Rescue Station in the Northern part of the Gulf. During this transit I received the following message from the gunline commander:

"Congratulations on successful completion of your gunline tour, having fired 1342 rounds safely and efficiently in the conduct of 33 NGFS missions. Initiative in initial liaison arrangements with NGLO (Navy Gunfire Liaison Officer) and spotters impressive."
I add my sincere thanks to the crew of LYNDE MC CORMICK for a job well done.

I would like to digress at this point and talk a little about LYNDE MC CORMICK's "Sailor of the Month" awards. Each month the ship's division officers present to a selection board their nominees for the "Sailor of the Month." From this list of nominees the board selects the winner and first runner up. The task of selecting these two outstanding individuals is extremely difficult because of the number of high caliber people aboard LYNDE MC CORMICK. With this in mind, I take great pride in sharing with you the names of the "Sailor of the Month", and First Runner up for the past four months.

Sailor of the Month

Dec. EN2 Daniel D. DRAHOS
Jan. GMT1 William J. HEISTERHAGEN
Feb. SK1 Marcel BAILLARGEON
Mar. BT3 Paul M. RICHARDSON

First Runner up

EM3 William J. ORR
GMG3 John ACRES
ET1 Herbert L. NEWTON
BM3 William J. ORR

Following our short tour in the Gulf of Tonkin we set sail for the greatest port in WESTPAC, Hong Kong. Hong Kong is a teeming, beautiful city nestled at the foot of Victoria Peak. The city is alive and bustling twenty-four hours a day and the number of shops and restaurants are too numerous to mention. I can safely say that a person could not visit them all in a year. Hong Kong is a veritable shoppers paradise; not only because it is a free port, but the prices of most goods are about one-half that of United States prices. I would hesitate to estimate the number of packages the crew brought aboard while in Hong Kong. In addition to all this, there was plenty of time for fun. One of the highlights of our visit to Hong Kong was our children's Christmas Party at which LYNDE MC CORMICK hosted 50 children from a local orphanage. The children were treated to hamburgers, ice cream, a cartoon show and a visit from Santa Claus who had a gift for each of them. In addition the ship's Welfare and Recreation Committee hosted two ship's parties. Good times were had by all.

On the morning of 28 December we left this bustling port and proceeded to Subic Bay for a few days of upkeep prior to going back to sea for another 30 days. LYNDE MC CORMICK left Subic Bay on the morning of 6 January 1972 for a short two day period of training exercises. This training consisted of firing a surface launched exercise torpedo at a submarine and a surface to air missile at a pilotless drone. Thanks to the training, hard work, and advance preparation of the sonar and missile technicians, both shots were hits.

During most of January LYNDE MC CORMICK was again assigned station in the North Search and Rescue area in the Tonkin Gulf. LYNDE MC CORMICK had the responsibility of controlling aircraft that flew from the carriers on Yankee Station. At the same time we were on constant guard for any pilot that went into the water. Due to the nature of this new task, the emphasis shifted from the weapons area, and focused on the radarmen in Combat Information Center. These outstanding men did a remarkable job in safely vectoring over 300 aircraft to their destinations.

To provide some variation from the normal routine a number of daily exercises and nightly activities were established. The bridge watch was kept busy with maneuvering and flag hoist drills. These drills gave our junior officers much needed training toward their officer of the deck qualification. Movies are always shown nightly on naval ships and our electricians did a good job procuring the best movies available in the fleet. Of particular interest to the crew was the twice weekly Bingo games, with LTJG Roy VAN HORN as the Master of Mirth and numbers caller. Roy did a great job of awarding the winners beautiful prizes from our fine stock of glitter in the Ship's Store.

In late January we found our much awaited visit to Sattahip, Thailand cancelled. However, as compensation we were assigned another port visit and the morning of 2 February found LYNDE MC CORMICK underway for Kaohsiung, Republic of China. Kaohsiung is located on the Southern side of Taiwan and is that nation's second largest industrial area and largest sea port. During our brief visit the crew made the most of a well deserved liberty port, and once again the exotic wares of the Orient were brought aboard. The ship's storage areas and various compartments took on the looks of a department store during the after Christmas rush. To add to the enjoyment of this port visit the ship's Welfare and Recreation Committee arranged for two more ship's parties. The crew, as always, enjoyed these festivities and it was a well deserved rest prior to future operations at sea.

When LYNDE MC CORMICK left Kaohsiung she made her way to Yankee Station for a few days of hard work and high speed steaming with the USS CORAL SEA. During this time our engineering department did a highly professional job, under adverse circumstances. As we left the Tonkin Gulf in mid February all hands felt that LYNDE MC CORMICK had done her job in a manner befitting the highest traditions of the Pacific Fleet Cruiser-Destroyer Force. Every Navy ship takes great pride in carrying out its scheduled commitments. LYNDE MC CORMICK was able to do so in each and every case.

We arrived in Subic Bay on the morning of 19 February, after 40 days without upkeep, for 7 days of much needed crew rest and ship's repair work. Our days went quickly and I feel that the whole crew did an excellent job of preparing the ship for her long voyage home.

In this second familygram I have written as Commanding Officer of LYNDE MC CORMICK, I would offer a few personal comments to the families of LYNDE MC CORMICK's crew. I feel that the families of ship crews are the most remarkable people, for it is they who share the loneliness of separation from their husbands, sons and grandsons. All of you are to be commended for your much appreciated sacrifices. I regret that in a thumbnail sketch such as this I cannot mention all members of the crew, for all are worthy of mention. There are two very special groups who deserve special congratulations, however. The first of these is those who were advanced to the new ratings indicated:

WALKER, Steven A.	SA/SN	REINHART, Dean D.	MMFA/MMFN
THOMAS, Dennis (N)	SR/SA	KUSY, Frederick	SM3/SM2
REINKE, Terence C.	MMFN/MM3	LASTER, Frank D.	STG2/ST1
OLLERO, Patrick	SD1/SDC	LEE, Jerry R.	FN/BT3
POGVARRA, Michael	FTG3/FTG2	RAMOS, Armando A.	SN/CS3
BROOKE, Richard	FTG3/FTG2	BOUDREAUX, John	MMFN/MM3
PALMER, Van S.	SA/SN	ENGLEDOW, Peter	FTG2/FTG1
WEINBERG, Michael	BTFA/BTFN		

The second of these is a group of men who have elected a Naval career by extending their enlistment or reenlisting in the Navy for periods ranging from 4 to 6 years. My very special congratulations and appreciation to these fine men, who by their application and devotion to duty, help to perpetuate this fine Navy of ours.

GMCS Donald H. POAGUE STG2 John J. PIPPIG FTG2 Richard M. BUSH
SKC Daniel H. KNOWLES FTM2 Thomas A. RAMEY BT2 T. MAKOWSKI
RMC Charles W. TURNER ETN2 Charles J. NELLANS FTG2 David R. RUSSELL
MMC Ralph E. NEWMAN ETR2 S. G. GAVES MM3 Thomas W. HENNESSY
EMC Marvin CARRERA FTG2 Richard L. BROOKE RD3 Dennis C. KUHNS
FTM2 Roland W. GUNN FTG2 Michael E. POGVARA BT3 Paul M. RICHARDSON

Very soon now we will arrive in San Diego and I know that I speak for all hands in saying that this day is most eagerly awaited. Once again I wish to reaffirm the great pride that I feel in serving with such a fine crew. I am looking forward to meeting their friends and families.

With best wishes to you all, I remain.

Sincerely yours,


R. D. GILLHAM