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USS KRETCHMER (DER 329)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco 96601

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From: Commanding Officer, USS KRETCHMER (DER 329)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B9)
Subj: USS KRETCHMER (DER 329) Command History; submission
of
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12
Encl: (1) USS KRETCHMER (DER 329) Command History for 1968

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

L. B. Mackin, Jr.

L. B. MACKIN, Jr.

Copy to:
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COMMAND HISTORY OF USS KRETCHMER (DER 329)

PART I - CHRONOLOGY

- 1-21 January 1968: Completion of Restricted Availability, Guam, M.I.
- 22 January 1968: Underway for Refresher Training, Yokosuka, Japan
- 26 February 1968: Arrived Guam, M.I. for upkeep
- 20 March 1968: Deployed to WESTPAC
- 30 March 1968: Passed ORI, Subic Bay, P.I.
- 1 April 1968: Began Taiwan Patrol
- 14 April 1968: Struck Submerged Object Damaging Propellers
- 25 April 1968: Fired Test Torpedo for ASW Training
- 2-6 May 1968: Drydocked in Subic Bay, P.I.
- 9 May 1968: Began Market Time Patrol, Area I
- 23-25 May 1968: Expended 480, 3-inch rounds in Support of Operation HOUSTON II
- 26 May 1968: Recovered 12 mailbags and personal gear ditched by Helicopter
- 1 June 1968: Expended 105, 3-inch rounds in Support of 5TH Marines
- 4-17 June 1968: Upkeep in Subic Bay, P.I.
- 21 June 1968 -
11 July 1968: Station Ship (SOPA ADMIN), Hong Kong
- 13 July 1968: Resumed Market Time Patrol, Area II
- 22 July 1968: Change of Command, Da Nang Harbor, South Vietnam
- 28 July 1968: Expended 300, 3-inch rounds in Support of 1ST BN, 52ND Infantry
- 1 August 1968: Expended 50, 3-inch rounds in Support of 1ST BN, 52ND Infantry

GROUP 1

Downgraded at 3-year intervals;
Declassified after 12 years

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Enclosure (1)

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COMMAND HISTORY OF USS KRETCHMER (DER 329)

PART I - CHRONOLOGY (CONT'D)

- 5 August - Resumed Taiwan Patrol
- 21 September 1968:
- 23 September 1968: Returned to Guam for Restricted Availability
- 13 December 1968: Dependent's Cruise

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COMMAND HISTORY OF USS KRETCHMER (DER 329)

PART II - BASIC NARRATIVE

As 1968 began, USS KRETCHMER (DER 329) was completing a restricted availability in SRF Guam. Although homeported in Guam, KRETCHMER had only ten families there. In the middle of January KRETCHMER steamed to Yokosuka, Japan for Refresher Training. Material difficulties prevented the successful completion of Refresher Training for KRETCHMER, and she returned to Guam late in February, after receiving considerable assistance from SRF Yokosuka.

A period of upkeep in Guam helped to prepare the ship for her 1968 deployment. With material deficiencies corrected, KRETCHMER deployed to WESTPAC in March. She passed an ORI and battle problem in Subic Bay, P.I., to complete the training discrepancy of not completing refresher training.

KRETCHMER's first operational mission on her fourth WESTPAC deployment since joining the Pacific Fleet in 1965 was serving as Taiwan Patrol ship. During the in-port period in Taiwan, the ship's ASW team was able to take advantage of the training facilities at the Chinese Naval Base at Tsoying, Taiwan. In her underway period, KRETCHMER spent considerable time performing tactical maneuvering and communications drills with units of the Nationalist Chinese Navy. KRETCHMER also had the opportunity to fire a practice torpedo at an American submarine during training off the coast of Taiwan. This was the first torpedo KRETCHMER had fired since her assignment to the Pacific Fleet.

During the early morning hours one day on the Taiwan Patrol, KRETCHMER struck a submerged object, causing damage to the ship's propellers. This damage necessitated KRETCHMER's going to Subic Bay for drydocking and repairs in May after completion of Taiwan Patrol duties.

Upon the replacement of one propeller and repairs to the other, KRETCHMER steamed to the coast of South Vietnam, where she was assigned as Market Time Patrol ship in Area I, just south of the DMZ. As a Market Time unit, KRETCHMER was responsible for preventing the infiltration of men and supplies from the North by sea routes into South Vietnam. In her twenty-day patrol in May-June, KRETCHMER inspected

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over 500 junks for contraband, including many which were suspicious enough to board and search.

Despite the rigorous demands of junk inspections, KRETCHMER received and answered requests for gunfire support missions in support of the 5th Marines. In her gunfire support, KRETCHMER's 3-inch mounts destroyed numerous Viet Cong bunkers, caves, and arms caches.

In the early hours of the morning of May 26, while on patrol some six miles south of the DMZ, one of KRETCHMER's lookouts spotted an object floating in the water several thousand yards from the ship. Closer inspection revealed that it was a mail bag floating in coastal waters. KRETCHMER recovered it and eleven other mail bags and assorted personal gear which, it developed, had been jettisoned by a helicopter crew just before the helicopter went down. The recovery brought grateful thanks from several ships operating nearby for which the mail was destined.

After her highly successful patrol off Vietnam, KRETCHMER returned to Subic Bay for a two week period of upkeep in June. Then she sailed to Hong Kong to spend three weeks there as station ship. The station ship in Hong Kong is responsible for handling all the SOPA (ADMIN) duties and providing a radio guard for all visiting ships of the Seventh Fleet. Despite long hours for some of the crew to insure a high state of reliability of communications and to provide necessary administrative services, KRETCHMER's crew was able to enjoy liberty in Hong Kong to the fullest.

In the middle of July, KRETCHMER returned to Vietnamese waters, this time on Market Time patrol just south of Chu Lai. During this patrol, KRETCHMER entered Da Nang harbor for a change of command ceremony. LCDR George E. PILLOW, Jr., of Franklin, Virginia, was relieved by LCDR Louis B. MACKIN, Jr., of Birmingham, Alabama. Later in the patrol, KRETCHMER provided gunfire support on a handful of occasions for the 52nd Infantry Americal Division, destroying or damaging a VC-held causeway, trenchlines, bunkers, and a VC base area. Altogether, in her two Market Time patrols, KRETCHMER shot over 1000 rounds from her two guns, while keeping vigilant for possible Viet Cong infiltration.

August saw KRETCHMER returning to duties as Taiwan Patrol ship. This period in Taiwan was extended to six weeks because of the decommissioning of four other DERs. During this period KRETCHMER was fortunate to participate in many training drills and exercises with Chinese Nationalist ships operating in the Taiwan Straits. Tropical Storms and typhoons were threatening constantly and on one occasion forced KRETCHMER to sortie from Keelung. During another period of typhoon evasion KRETCHMER spent several days operating with her sister ship USS FINCH (DER 328).

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On September 23, KRETCHMER returned to her homeport Guam for a restricted availability, leave and upkeep. After her RAV, KRETCHMER celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of her first commissioning by hosting a dependents cruise off the western coast of Guam, on December 13. As the year drew to a close, the crew of 130 enlisted men and 12 officers were involved in training and preparing the ship for Refresher Training in Japan in January.

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COMMAND HISTORY OF USS KRETCHMER (DER 329)

PART III - ANNEX A

ROSTER OF OFFICERS

<u>BILLET</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>SERIAL # DESIGNATOR</u>
COMMANDING OFFICER	LCDR	Louis B. MACKIN, Jr.	595328/1100
EXECUTIVE OFFICER	LT	Ernest L. WALLACE	642893/1100
OPERATIONS OFFICER	LT	James R. BERRY	688637/1100
ENGINEER OFFICER	LTJG	Milford C. COX, Jr.	703248/1100
WEAPONS OFFICER	LTJG	Eric W. SCOTT	713823/1105
SUPPLY OFFICER	LTJG	Frank H. BRUSH	714859/3105
ASW OFFICER	LTJG	James H. TRAPNELL, Jr.	720592/1105
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER	LTJG	Richard N. ELDRED	725647/1105
DAMAGE CONTROL ASST.	LTJG	Aidan J. JONES	726241/1105
FIRST LIEUTENANT	ENS	Laurence E. LOF	733904/1105
MAIN PROPULSION ASST.	ENS	Jessie E. COLEMAN, Jr.	734176/1105
CIC OFFICER	ENS	John H. GILES	742397/1105

PART III - ANNEX B

ROSTER OF ENLISTED MEN

SD3 M. ALONZO	FA J. FREEMAN	RM2 T. RAMOS
TN A. AGALUDUD	EN3 A. FUNO	EN1 K. ROSS
TN F. AGBAGLUD	RDSN M. GAMBLE	SN M. ROTH
CS1 F. ALBERTE	SFP3 GERSTEL	EM2 R. RUSSELL
FA J. ALEXANDER	SA C. GOMEZ	FA R. SAUER
EMFN D. ALFORD	STC H. GREER	EN2 J. SCOTT
SH2 B. ANDERSON	YN1 F. GUEVARA	FR L. SCOTT
EN2 P. ANDERSON	CS3 R. HAMILTON	EN3 D. SHARP
DK3 D. ANTHONY	STG3 P. HANDY	ENFN W. E. SIGSBY
SN J. BARKLEY	FN P. HAYES	SN W. H. SIGSBY
RM1 J. BASS	IC3 E. HEFLEY	EN3 H. SIMMERMAN
FA R. BEARDEN	TM3 M. HEMPHILL	ETR2 M. SINGLETON
GMG3 R. BEHLMER	SML C. HIRN	FN D. STACKS
RM3 BOLAND	SN R. HOLLOWAY	RM2 D. STEFFES
EN2 J. BORK	SN L. HOPKINS	STG2 J. STOMBERG
MR3 R. BOSSART	GMG3 L. HUFF	EM2 C. STRANAHAN
SFM2 J. BRADLEY	QML H. ISABELL	TN R. SUAYAN
EN3 L. BRANCH	CS2 K. KATSTRUP	GMG3 L. TALSE
ETR2 J. BRANDT	FA T. KNEPPLE	SH1 A. TAITAGUE
FA K. BRANSCUM	RD2 R. LABUDA	DC2 T. THOMPSON
CS1 W. BROWN	RMSN M. LADUE	HMC W. THOMPSON
YN3 R. BRUEGGEMAN	FTG2 M. LARSON	BM1 A. TOOHEY
BM3 R. BURKETT	SD1 S. LIMON	BM3 D. VIENNA
QMSN J. BURTON	FN W. LIVERMORE	SA J. VORCE
BT3 M. BUSSERT	FA C. MCADAMS	FTG3 R. WALDORF
SKSN A. CABAEL	TN R. MENDOZA	RDC R. WARE
SA B. CAMPBELL	RM3 W. MIKKELSON	SN W. WARREN
ET1 T. CARDWELL	RD3 B. MILLER	FN D. WATSON
GMG3 J. CARRON	SFP3 R. MORSE	EM2 G. WATSON
FA A. CANTOR	SMSA P. MURPHY	STG3 L. WEIS
SN W. CLAPPER	RD3 T. NEILSEN	FA D. WHITE
SN B. CLAY	SA D. NELSON	EN2 P. WHITE
FN G. CRUMBAUGH	ENCS NELSON	EM1 J. WILLIAMS
FA P. DAVIS	SN R. NOEL	FA R. WING
SD3 H. DELAS ALAS	EN2 NOUSEN	SMS W. WINN
BD1 F. DEYOUNG	SKSN D. O'CONNELL	
FA J. DROUHARD	IC2 D. OLSON	
SN J. DUBEREK	EMC M. PADUA	
SK2 DUFFIELD	SN R. PAXTON	
FA J. EHRlichMAN	EM3 R. PHELPS	
SN T. ELDER	EN3 O. POLLET	
EN2 J. ENNIS	RDSN R. POWELL	
SK2 W. FLORES	FN R. POWER	
EN1 B. FRANCISCO	PN3 I. PULETU	