

We began our journey on the first day of the tenth month in the final year of a most incredible decade. EDISTO was to be part of OPERATION DEEPFREEZE 1970. Man's footprints were on the moon and there were new frontiers to conquer. Our destination was the earth's last frontier---Antarctica!

For some it would be a totally new experience; for others another long deployment; and then for some it was but a small part of a dedicated service career. As we pulled away from the pier we looked back at those we left behind and felt the bitter cold of that November morning.

A Nor'easter awaited us off the New England coast. Perhaps it was just the sea letting us know she was her own mistress. After days of bouncing off bulkheads we had acquired our sea legs; but land was a welcome sight---our first stop, Norfolk, Va.

While in Norfolk we loaded rocket motors that scientists at Byrd Station, Antarctica, would use for upper air observations, and demolitions to be used to blast ourselves free in case we ever got stuck in the ice. It was also a chance to pick up supplies before departing the U. S.

Good-by CONUS as we headed south to the Panama Canal. The sea showed her gentle side. The only interruption was the medical evacuation of a sick EDISTOMAN to Kingston, Jamaica, by our "Green Ducks"---helos #1403 and #1404. For the first time EDISTO had a Coast Guard helo detachment aboard. The new EDISTOMEN were from the Icebreaker Section, C G Air Station, Mobile, Alabama. We were happy to have them with us--especially at a time such as this!

Once through the Panama Canal we stopped at the U. S. Naval Station at Rodman, Canal Zone. It was our first foreign port of call. Our stay was short; the world's largest ocean was there for us to cross.

Soon after departing Panama EDISTO crossed the equator and King Neptune and his Royal Court convened on board. Lowly Pollywogs were initiated in the very best of traditions as they became prestigious Shellbacks. Some of the benefits of the initiation included free haircuts and a bath in the royal pool. Such a deal!

Travelling through South Pacific waters we reached Papeete, Tahiti, and a three day visit. The beauty of this tropical paradise would certainly be in contrast with our ultimate destination, and penguins would be no match for the colorful dancing girls that greeted us upon our arrival.