

On the 4th of June 1969 Pier 91, Seattle was bustling with excitement as the CGC KLAMATH made final preparations for her journey to the waters of the Far East.

Wives, families, and friends were there to bid their last farewells and begin to realize just how long ten months can be. Amongst tears, waves, and smiles we set sail for Hawaii, the first of many stops!

As dawn broke on the 11th, the majestic figure of Diamond Head stood before us. We proceeded into Pearl Harbor. A Coast Guard small boat met us in the channel and presented us with a large red and white lei, which we draped proudly across our bow. We were met on the pier by several young ladies dressed in traditional costumes, who had fresh pineapple and leis for all. Our stay of five days gave us a chance to enjoy the hospitality of the islands and see and do many things. The ship's morale fund sponsored a beach party with food, beer, and sports. Needless to say, Hawaii was enjoyed by all.

On the 16th of June, with the crew refreshed, we headed west for Guam. Temperature and humidity continued to rise and we were quite aware of it. Our newly installed air conditioner began its arduous task. The 10 days from Hawaii to Guam were spent conducting drills and instructions, preparing us for our on-coming task.

As we crossed the 180th Meridian on the 20th, the traditional "Golden Dragon" initiation was held. The day started early as the "pollywogs" (those who hadn't crossed before) decided to defend themselves with eggs and fire hoses. The "pollywogs" tried but eventually failed and each one was subjected to trial and sentence by a "Kangaroo Court". The sentences consisted of a partial balding, a raw egg shampoo, and a "molasses and feathering". The initiation was held in good spirits and after a clean up, we enjoyed a steak barbeque!

We arrived in Guam on schedule for a brief stay of four hours to take on fuel. We had now steamed over 5,000 miles, yet the trip had just begun. Mail from home became the primary need.

After leaving Guam, we transited the San Bernadino Straits and arrived in Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, our home away from home, and prepared for our forthcoming inspection by Commander Coast Guard Squadron Three. The inspection went well and we were complimented on our appearance and our ship. We then briefly enjoyed our first stay in Subic.

We left the Philippines after a brief four day visit, and headed for the waters of Vietnam and our first patrol.

Complete confusion reigned for the first few days as this was a completely new experience for all, but we soon gained experience and confidence and settled into the daily routine.

Our main function while on patrol was that of Coastal Surveillance. We boarded and inspected trawlers, junks, sampans, and other surface craft to search for contraband material and possible enemy infiltration. We helped the Holy Family Hospital in Qui Nhon by doing some general maintenance and painting. We also donated \$185 to their cause, for which we received a letter of appreciation.