



R. D. White, P. E. Bernache, C. D. Marsh, K. F. J. Banyas, K. M. Ream, S. Johnson, S. M. Page, R. L. Reyes, D. J. Sobeck

OPERATIONS

The Operations Department — consisting of quartermasters, radiomen, electronics technicians, a telephone technician, radarmen, marine science technicians, and assorted officers — successfully completed all of the tasks assigned during the seven months of Deep Freeze 77. Many long hours were expended preparing the ship for the deployment, often calling for cancellation of liberty to complete necessary tasks. Despite the necessary extra effort, all hands willingly responded to get the job done.

And all of the work soon paid off when NORTHWIND arrived at Guantanamo, Cuba, for three weeks of underway training. Our preparations were, for the most part, well executed, as we departed Gitmo with a hard-earned but well-deserved "E" in operational readiness. To our knowledge, no other icebreaker has ever earned an "E" at Gitmo.

From Gitmo, the voyage was literally downhill. After passage through the Panama Canal came the 22-day crossing of the Pacific — with long, tedious watches and a seemingly endless ocean. Wellington, New Zealand, was a welcome sight to us all.

Antarctica, as always, gave us many challenges. QM's stood many cold watches as we broke into McMurdo and radarmen were constantly running flight OPs as we searched for the best route through the ice pack. During this period the ET's and TT kept our gear going, and the radiomen kept us in close contact with the outside world - especially through the valuable class E telegrams. While underway and during oceanographic OPs, the MST's put in endless frozen hours manning the winch, taking observations, and assisting the scientists.

It would be unfair to single out individual shipmates for their outstanding work, as all of Operations, and the crew as a whole, performed admirably. The chiefs, however, should get an extra ounce of credit, as it was their experience and guidance that led us through those difficult evolutions. To Master Chief Wallace, Senior Chiefs Reyes and San Jule, and Chief Ingle, those of us fortunate to serve with them extend our hearty well done.

To all of us the deployment was a great deal of hard work, many months away from home and loved ones, and at times dangerous. But to all of us the deployment was also one of the greatest experiences of our lifetimes, and the thrill of it will never subside.