

# DEPARTURE

The morning of 27 March 1970 began in Boston as just another average early spring day; a crisp wind was blowing in from the sea, sunny skies, and very cool temperatures. To the people of Boston there was nothing unusual about this day.

To the men of Sherman and our families this was far from an average day. This day would come to mean the beginning of one of the most memorable events of our lives. This day would be remembered vividly during the months to follow.

It was nearly impossible for us to know what the coming months would hold in store for us. We felt the excitement but we were unaware of the reality of our mission until the shock of leaving our families subdued. To many of us the reality of this day did not fully reveal itself until Sherman was at sea.

At 0700 many people were seen on the decks and inside the ship. As the hours of the morning quickly passed, more and more of our loved ones appeared and shared our last few hours before departure. At 0915 we were saying our farewells and embracing our loved ones for the last time in many months. This was the most difficult part of the day but it was something that had to be done.

Quarters were held and mooring stations were set. At 1000 our last line was hauled aboard and Sherman was underway. The XO sounded that last long blast which was our final farewell to all our families still standing on the pier. It was at that moment that the realization of our departure began to strike home. Sherman had begun the long voyage; a voyage which was to carry us almost sixty thousand miles.