

FLEET FOCUS

Combined production, engineering efforts helps USS Denver homeward



Lynette Christensen photo

A Shop 26 welder cuts away damaged plates on the bow of USS Denver (LPD 9) at Bravo 3 pier. PHNSY & IMF workers made temporary repairs to the ship July 14-27 to ensure a safe return to the West Coast.

By Jason D. Holm
PEARL HARBOR NAVAL SHIPYARD AND IMF

USS Denver (LPD 9) departed Pearl Harbor Navy Shipyard & IMF on July 27 "all smiles" and eager to return to its homeport in San Diego. At a glance, the 570-foot amphibious transport dock ship looked almost as good as new.

That wasn't the case when it first pulled up to Bravo 3 on July 14. An at-sea collision the day before had left a gaping 40-foot hole in the bow from the second deck to the waterline.

PHNSY & IMF was tasked to fix the ship as soon as possible so it could sail at full speed to the West Coast. Denver was scheduled for availability at its homeport so the repairs at Pearl Harbor did not have to re-

store the ship to its original design.

However, the temporary structure had to be strong enough to withstand the journey and hydrodynamically shaped so the ship could cut through the water at 20 knots.

Divers from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) ONE videotaped the entire underwater hull to aid in the engineering assessment. In addition to the visible damage above the waterline, the bow had a thin crack that extended five feet below the waterline, as if a hatchet had split the thick metal plates.

Although a dry dock was available, PHNSY & IMF decided to do the repairs pier-side. A large amount of supplies and debris had to be removed from the Denver. Among the environmental concerns were the presence of lead paint on the inside and outside of the ship and preventing anything from dropping into the harbor. Cutting away the mass of crumpled metal and damaged structures proved to be time-consuming and difficult.

A particular challenge for the Engineering and Planning Department, Code 200, was designing the new bow structure and then figuring out how to tie it in to the ship so it was adequately supported.

Repair efforts went on 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Denver was returning from a six-month deployment and the ship's force was anxious to be reunited with their families.

Thirteen days later, Denver left the harbor for an underway test of the repaired bow.

"People worked very hard on it," said Project Superintendent Ronald Obrey. "It was a complete team effort by all who participated in the repairs."

"We had several evolutions all occurring simultaneously — shipwrights installing and continually modifying staging to support different evolutions, ship's force re-

moving debris, welders cutting away crumpled and twisted steel, riggers and laborers removing the cut-away material, and shipfitters laying out shipboard dimensions, and on the deck plate, engineering (personnel) modifying the design of the installation to suit existing shipboard conditions.

"This effort was an absolute display and tribute to the skills, knowledge and dedication of the artisans and engineers on this project," he continued. "Everyone involved put forth an outstanding effort."

The area repaired was roughly 40 feet high and 24 feet back from the bow. About 54 tons of new plates and beams had been installed and held together with 1,300 pounds of welding electrodes (rods).

Denver started out at 12 knots, increasing speed at two-knot increments and holding for five minutes each time. The ship attained maximum speed at 18 and a half knots, which was excellent considering it was carrying a full load of fuel.

Supervisory naval architect Eric Baquiro was one of two Code 200 observers on board at the time. "Everything looked good," he recalled. "(The repairs) met the criteria — no deflection, no cracked welds, no leaks."

Two other PHNSY & IMF personnel, in a helicopter flying alongside the ship, confirmed the repairs were a success.

The captain of the ship, in a report transmitted the following day, commented, "Great to be underway! ... Many thanks to all of the people who had a hand in making Denver seaworthy to complete home transit. All smiles here."

Perhaps the words of Baquiro best described the PHNSY & IMF effort. "Everyone on the project put their heart and soul into it," he said. "From afar, you wouldn't have known the ship had been in a collision."

USS Russell hosts Japanese ships in Pearl Harbor

By Lt. j. g. Orrin Johnson
USS RUSSELL

ON July 30, nine Japanese Defense Service ships steamed into Pearl Harbor on their return from California port visits.

Thanks in part to the crew of Russell, the Japanese sailors left on Thursday, Aug. 3 having enjoyed a relaxing and fun trip to the Islands.

Pearl Harbor based USS Russell (DDG 59) hosted three of these ships - JDS Harusame (DD 104), JDS Kirisame (DD 102), and JDS Yuudachi (DD 103).

During their stay, Russell provided liaison officers and drivers to help the Japanese

get around and to make them feel at home.

Several events were planned throughout the week to add a little Aloha to their visit.

Russell's Supply Department went above and beyond as they executed a superb barbecue, serving more than 300 Russell and Japanese Sailors everything from ribs and chicken to good old fashioned hot dogs and hamburgers.

Russell's crew played each Japanese ship in a friendly game of softball. There was a formal exchange of ships' plaques, and the Sailors themselves traded command ballcaps.

During the visit Cmdr. Muneyoshi Fukunaga, Commanding Officer of the JDS Harusame, and his executive officer, Cmdr.

Hasegawa, toured USS Russell.

Both men expressed how impressed they had been with the American Navy throughout the week, and extended their thanks to the entire Navy community of Hawaii for its warm welcome during both RIMPAC 2000 and this latest visit.

As crewmen from Russell cast off the lines for the Japanese ships Thursday morning, they reflected on a job well done.

The two ships participated in one of the Navy's most important functions - strengthening international ties through personal exchanges and building individual bonds between Sailors.

Russell Sailors look forward to the next opportunity to host their visiting brethren from abroad.



Lt. j. g. Orrin Johnson photo

Lt. Cmdr. Jim Vitha (left), USS Russell's executive officer, shows Cmdr. Hasegawa (center), JDS Harusame (DD 104) executive officer and Cmdr. Muneyoshi Fukunaga (right), commanding officer JDS Harusame (DD 104) around the bridge of Russell. Russell hosted three Japanese ships, JDS Harusame (DD 104), JDS Kirisame (DD 102), and JDS Yuudachi (DD 103) recently as they visited Pearl Harbor.

USS Reuben James Sailors take part in COMREL projects

By Lt. j. g. Jose Fikes
USS REUBEN JAMES

Led by Chief Electricians Mate(SW) Brian E. Stone, 27 Sailors from the USS Reuben James participated in a community relations project in Brunei. The Fighting 57 (the nickname Reuben James Sailors use for their ship) is part of the U.S. Naval force participating in a series of operational exercises with the Royal Brunei Navy.

These exercises enhance mutual tactical expertise, build stronger military to military operations and strengthen the bond between our nations. Yet, the activities of these U.S. Navy Sailors do not end on the high seas. The Navy's endless dedication to better relations with other countries and Reuben James' dedication to CARAT-00 was shown as members of Reuben James took the time and effort to assist the local community.

The KACA Handicapped Children's Center in Brunei was the scene of a combined community relations project with Sailors from USS Sides.

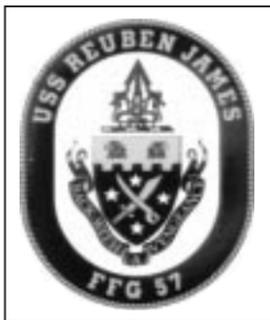
The community relations volunteers replaced two fences that posed a hazard to the young children, built a new fence to isolate

the parking facility, and repaired several cosmetic flaws in the building's structure. All in a day's work for this creative group of volunteers!

Reuben James' involvement in building better relations with the people of Brunei once again proved how important CARAT-00 is in improving Nation-to-Nation relationships as local media and COMLOGWEST PAC representatives looked on in awe. This is the third successful community relations project lead by ETC(SW) Stone.

Previous community relations project's include Thailand and Singapore. The Sailors love helping these young children, "And there I was playing with one of the beautiful children. I drew him a picture a U.S. Sailor and a ship and explained how we were here to help," commented Aerographer's Mate 2nd Class Garza, M. "We just like getting out there and making a difference. This was a good project well within our abilities as a team. I know we left a positive impression in Brunei," said ETC(SW) Stone.

The Fighting 57 spirit is alive and well and will always be remembered long after CARAT-00. These sailors have continued to prove the lives of others as they sail through Southeast Asia.



Republic of Korea intelligence officers visit Patrol Squadron 47

By Lt. Michael Sanders
VP-47



PH2 Andrew Rutigliano photo

Republic of Korea intelligence officers depart one of VP-47 P-3C aircraft after a tour. The group of officers toured the aircraft as part of the International Exchange Operations Intelligence Seminar.

Recently, a group of Republic of Korea intelligence officers toured a VP-47 P-3C "Orion" as part of the International Exchange Operations Intelligence Seminar.

Lt. Cmdr. Michael Huff from the VP-47 Training Department greeted Cmdr. Park, Lt. Cmdr. Sur, and Lt. j. g. Park of the Republic of Korea Navy at the Tactical Support Facility in Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. The gentlemen were participating in a foreign exchange program coordinated by Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) International Program. Lt. Michael Wallace of CINCPACFLT said that this program is designed to increase cooperation and understanding with U.S. allies in the Pacific region. Some of the other countries that participate in the program are Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

The tour consisted of a presentation of each station in the aircraft by a crewmember. Lt. j. g. David Belew talked about the flight station while Lt. Mark Sohaney discussed the Tactical Coordinators role in the P-3 mission. Aviation Warfare Operator Second Class Dan Clark and Third Class Ronald Adrianse showed points of interest on the radar and acoustic tracking systems.

As the tour ended, Cmdr. Park expressed his gratitude with a bow and proceeded back to the Tactical Support Facility to continue their seminar training.