The year 1968 aboard USS Harry E. Hubbard (DD-748)

compiled by Dick Oliver from deck logs & muster logs

The USS Harry E. Hubbard (DD-748) ship began the year 1968 at pier 16 in home port Long Beach with the destroyer tender USS Isle Royal AD-289 to starboard. The ship got underway 15 January for training and local ops with USS Bennington CVS-20 and returned Friday 19 January. Monday the ship was again underway, this time in a fog bank, for a day of anti-submarine drills with USS Bream SS-243, returning to Long Beach early Tuesday morning 23 January. Then underway again Thursday 25 January with fog, arriving in San Diego in the afternoon. and spending the night at a mooring buoy before getting underway again at 0646. Students from Fleet Training Center came aboard by boat for gunnery exercises with Mounts 51 and 52. The students debarked later that day and Hubbard was back in Long Beach by dinner time. On 31 January the ship made the round trip to Seal Beach to load ammo. Next underway was 6 February for training and drills with USS Duncan DD-784 and two submarines plus firing of 3"50 ammo from mounts 31 and 32. Hubbard refueled from USS Constellation CVA-64. Hubbard returned to Long Beach late Sunday 12 February. Nothing much happened the rest of the month except for a Class Bravo fire in the after fireroom caused by sparks from a cutting torch igniting fresh paint.

On 11 March the ship loaded ammo at Seal Beach. From 18 to 29 March the ship was underway for training off San Clemente that included firing mounts 51 and 52. The ship was in and out of San Diego, often in fog, before returning to Long Beach. Next underway for training was April 9-10, this time featuring firing exercises with a towed target and towing exercises with sister ship USS Samuel N. Moore DD-747. The next day Hubbard had a brief outing with members of the California Yacht Club aboard and anchored in Avalon Bay Santa Catalina Island. On 20 April the ship was underway to and from Seal Beach replenishing ammo. Next underway for training was 29 April to 3 May with a number of ships. Exercises included firing a torpedo and an abandon ship drill. There was another underway 20-24 May with extensive exercises. The return to Long Beach was brief as the ship was underway the 25th for a one day Dependents Cruise. The ship visited San Diego and Seal Beach 27-30 May. The ship was in a floating drydock from 11 to 22 June. Dock trials were the morning of 24 June and underway for Seal Beach that afternoon where the ship was tied up to the pier overnight, returning to Long Beach the next afternoon.

Thursday 18 July was the big day. Sister ship USS Samuel N. Moore DD-747, moored outboard of our ship, got underway at 0844. Hubbard got underway at 0858. The four ships sailing together also included USS Decatur DDG-31 and USS Brinkley Bass DD-887. The fog detail was stationed from 0911 to 1127. At 2012 the ship lost power and was Dead in the Water but recovered power shortly thereafter. At 0035 Friday 19 July USS Harry E. Hubbard reversed course to return to Long Beach due to an inoperative gyro compass and a damaged spring bearing. Fog was again encountered. Saturday at 2008 the ship moored alongside repair ship USS Delta AR-9. Sunday at 1206 the ship was again underway for WestPac, this time independently. In rough seas SFM2 John Wesley Kinney was injured in securing a loose acetylene bottle on deck. The ship arrived in Pearl Harbor 0813 27 July. Tuesday 30 July Hubbard was underway again 1for WestPac in a four ship formation. Friday 2 August the ships made a refueling stop at Midway Island. USS Hancock CVA-19 joined the group transiting to Yokosuka Japan. Sunday 4 August Hubbard replenished from Hancock and Tuesday 6 August refueled from the carrier. Our ship anchored at Yokosuka 8 August to offload ammo before mooring at a pier starboard side to USS Decatur DDG-31.

USS Harry E. Hubbard DD-748, USS Brinkley Bass DD-887, USS Samuel N. Moore DD-747 and USS Hancock CVA-19 departed Sunday 11 August en route Subic Bay. At times USS Decatur DDG-31 joined the group. Hubbard reached Subic Bay 15 August and was initially berthed between USS Brinkley Bass DD-882 and USS Decatur DDG-31 until Saturday 17 August when it moved to Riviera pier. Our ship sortied from Subic Sunday 25 August returning later that evening but left again at 0313 early Monday for Tonkin Gulf Republic of Vietnam. En route they investigated a junk stranded on North Reef and refueled from an oiler, reaching PIRAZ Station late in the evening 28 August. In RVN and when operating with a carrier USS Harry E. Hubbard DD-748 received mail and other supplies by helo. The first part of the deployment in Vietnamese waters the ship operated with USS Wainwright DLG-28 patrolling an assigned sector in the northern Gulf of Tonkin at slow speed with one ready gun mount. On 31 August our ship refueled from USS Chemung AO-30 and replenished from USS Graffias AF-29 and USS Pollux AFS-4. The ship refueled 3 September in the early evening hours. On 5 September Hubbard was relieved by another destroyer and departed for Subic Bay, arriving 2045 6 September. Some engineering issues were discovered. Daytime sea trials were conducted 21, 24 and 25 September and longer sea trial 29 September returning 30 September. Part of the time Hubbard was tied up next to an Australian ship, HMAS Perth.

On 2 October Hubbard set sail for Yankee Station off the coast of Vietnam, arriving 3 October and taking station on the USS Hancock CVA-19. On Yankee Station the oiler sometimes fueled two ships at a time, as the USS Kawishiwi AO-146 did with the Hubbard and Hancock on 5 October. The Hancock was soon replaced by the USS America (CVA-66). On the 11th Hubbard ceased plane guard duty and began ASW training ops with destroyers including USS Ramsey DEG-2 and USS Bausell DD-845. Men from the submarine USS Raton (AGSS-270) visited the Hubbard. On 15 October Hubbard returned to plane guard duty with USS America CVA-66 and USS England DLG-22. The ship replenished from USS Pollux AKS-4 19 and 20 October. Ship was visited by a Catholic chaplain by helo. USS Walker DD-517 and USS Preston DD-795 arrived. Hubbard continued to refuel about every third day from the USS Camden AOE-3. Mail and occasionally crew members arrived and departed by helo. Hubbard detached from Yankee Station duty 27 October to check on activity in the Paracel Islands, returning the 29th but soon departing for Subic, arriving 31 October.

The next day, 1 November, the ship departed Subic for Sasebo Japan for engineering repairs. The ship anchored in Buckner Bay Okinawa for crew recreation 3 November and remained overnight. The ship arrived in Sasebo 5 November and departed 11 November in the afternoon. The ship made another overnight stop in Buckner Bay. Arriving in the Vietnam area 16 November the ship received a vertical replenishment from USS Mars AFS-1 in the morning and fuel that evening from USS Camden AOE-2. The deck log indicates Yankee Station Sunday 17 November relieving USS Samuel N. Moore DD-747 as plane guard for USS Hancock CVA-19. The ship refueled from the oiler on the 17th, 20th and 23rd. Other ships at Yankee Station were USS Berkeley DDG-15 and USS Walker DD-517. On 24 November the ship was relieved of plane guard duties and proceeded to operate with USS Ingersoll DD-652, USS Taylor DD-468, USS Orleck DD-886, USS Jenkins DD-447 and USS England DLG-22. In a training exercise LTjg Carmody was highlined to and from USS Jenkins. After our ship refueled from USS Camden AOE-2, the oiler and the USS Hancock CVA-19 collided as seen and photographed by some of our crew. USS Harry E. Hubbard DD-748 subsequently refueled from USS Cacapon AO-52 27 November and on the 28th was detached and proceeded independently to her next assignment where she operated with USS Parsons DDG-33. The 29th LT Koiro sustained a broken arm when the ship was hit by a rogue wave and he was evacuated to the USS Hornet CVS-12 by helo.

The ship next went to Hong Kong for R & R. Dodging fishing boats on the approach, Hubbard tied up to a mooring buoy in the harbor 2 December. On 7 December she left for Subic, arriving early on the 9th. Monday 16 December USS Harry E. Hubbard DD-748 departed Subic for NGFS assignment II Corps Republic of Vietnam, arriving the 18th. After a firing mission, the ship refueled from USS Tolavano AO-64 beginning around midnight. The ship's gunfire missions were mainly Harrassment and Interdiction in an irregular pattern, both day and nighttime. The ship refueled about every third day. On 21 December a USN Patrol Boat came alongside for a visit and the next day USCGC 82317 did so also. On 23 December refueling from USS Platte AO-24 at night was canceled due to high seas but was accomplished the following morning. Naval Gunfire was suspended for most of Christmas Day, not resuming until 2243. The ship kept up the heavy NGFS schedule until 7 January.