

COMBAT OPERATIONS IN 1972



"I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast; for I intend to go in harm's way."
John Paul Jones

Below is a letter from our Commanding Officer Kenneth G. Haynes informing our families that Providence was going in "harm's way." He asked for prayers and to keep the faith as Providence proceeded to combat missions off Haiphong Harbor in 1972.

This letter was sent after losing three high ranking officers in a helicopter accident off the fantail of Providence. Little did we know the dangers of combat operations.

Sam Villa, FTM3

Operation Custom Tailor was an American cruiser and destroyer strike force that conducted a daring raid on Haiphong, North Vietnam, in May 1972. It was a history-making strike that involved the most formidable cruiser/destroyer fleet in the Western Pacific since World War II. During the strike, military targets within four miles of Haiphong were hit and enemy opposition was heavy. The ships participating were the USS *Hanson*, USS *Buchanan*, USS *Newport News*, USS *Providence* and USS *Oklahoma City*.....*Wikipedia*

Note: copy of letter was submitted by Frank Scibetta of 2nd Division; his family continued to receive letters even though he had been transferred in April to Music School in Hawaii.





USS PROVIDENCE (CLG-6)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California 96601

30 April 1972

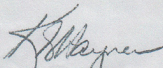
Dear Families of PROVIDENCE,

This is the first of information letters to the families of the crew of PROVIDENCE. In addition to the normal publication of our ship's magazine "PRIVATEER", letters similar to this will be forwarded to you as often as possible during PROVIDENCE's deployment to Western Pacific Waters. Every attempt will be made to keep you informed of our schedule and duties.

I appreciate the impact on PROVIDENCE families resulting from the short notice of our leaving San Diego. The crew as usual met the challenge when we sailed on time and ready. After a rapid cruise to the Philippines with brief stops at Pearl Harbor and Guam, we arrived in Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines on April 25th. Despite the short time inport, devoted primarily to loading supplies and refueling, the crew enjoyed the opportunity to visit a foreign port.

During this past year PROVIDENCE has met all assignments and the crew has performed with distinction. We are well trained and ready.

Sincerely,



R. G. HAYNES
Captain, U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer

P.S. More letters

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS PROVIDENCE (CLG 6)
FPO, SAN FRANCISCO 96601

30 May 1972

Dear PROVIDENCE Families,

I write to you on the eve of our departure for ten days stand-down time. We will be in Subic Bay in the Republic of the Philippines for seven of those days in which will rest both crew and machinery.

It is difficult to express to you my admiration for the quality of your PROVIDENCE man. He has without exception performed superbly. He has stood watches 12 hours on and 12 hours off, sometimes without sleep, missing meals and on occasion, missing his mail. He has not complained.

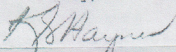
We realize that we are here to help bring this terrible war to some kind of conclusion. It is now our conviction that we shall do so.

The ship is in fine mechanical condition, the crew is one of the best in the Navy and they are taking care of each other in an outstanding fashion. The crew is self-reliant.

Remember us in your prayers and pray as well that the North Vietnamese will understand the conviction that now underwrites the American commitment in Southeast Asia.

Be not afraid and we hope that you too will keep the faith.

Sincerely,



K. G. HAYNES
Captain, U.S. Navy

3 July 1972

Dear PROVIDENCE Families,

This letter is both a continuation of the correspondence established between you and my predecessor, Captain Haynes, and an opportunity to introduce myself to the families, relatives and friends who mean so much to the men of PROVIDENCE.

I have been aboard PROVIDENCE for only a brief period, having assumed command on the 17th of June while at sea and in the midst of SEVENTH Fleet operations in the Gulf of Tonkin. There are no words to express the pride and pleasure that I feel in being given the privilege of commanding PROVIDENCE and her superb crew. At the same time, I am fully cognizant of the grave responsibilities that this assignment places upon me. I recognize my total accountability to my country, to my Naval superiors and, equally, to you, the wives, parents, families and relatives of these splendid men, for the safety, welfare and operational effectiveness of PROVIDENCE and all who sail in her.

I approach this task with confidence based on twenty years of commissioned service, fourteen of which have been spent at sea and eleven of those seagoing years in various units of our Navy's Cruiser-Destroyer Forces. At the same time, I approach my assignment with a humility borne of previous experience in command, for I know that a ship, whatever its capabilities or its weapons, is only as effective as its crew --- the officers, petty officers, seamen and firemen that give it life, that infuse a spirit and a will into their ship's machinery and equipment. And, I know too that the spirit and the will of these men depend inherently on the strength, the trust and the support that they receive from their loved ones at home.

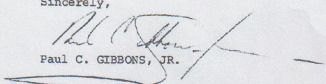
You can be proud of your men who sail in PROVIDENCE. They have performed their tasks nobly and courageously in an arduous and extraordinarily challenging combat environment. I can well understand and appreciate your concern for their health and safety. You may be sure that I share that concern and will do everything within my power to ensure their safe and rapid return home.

There are very few men who are qualified to discuss, much less debate, the varied, complex and sensitive subject of the conflict in Vietnam. I cannot pretend to have all the answers on this subject. I can say this, however; the deployment of PROVIDENCE to Southeast Asian waters at this time was vitally necessary; and, the contribution that this great ship, manned by your husbands, sons, fathers and brothers, is making and will continue to make is an historically important one. Our national goal of Vietnamization envisions an honorable withdrawal of U.S. forces from direct combat involvement in the Vietnam war. It presupposes a degree of self-sufficiency on the part of the forces of the Republic of Vietnam that will enable them to withstand the aggressive and ruthless thrusts of the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong communists. The current North Vietnamese offensive has been blunted. Although much hard fighting remains ahead, I am confident that the enemy will be defeated by our brave South Vietnamese allies on the ground and by the support and offensive power provided by the ships and aircraft of the United States striking from the sea and air. The men of PROVIDENCE are a part of this crucial effort --- their role is indispensable. They need your best wishes and your prayers.

As their Captain, I commend each of these wonderful PROVIDENCE men to you. I ask you to give them your loyalty, your patience, your understanding and your unwavering support. I humbly ask for your prayers for them and for me. You may be sure that you are in their hearts and prayers, and in mine.

God bless them and you.

Sincerely,


Paul C. GIBBONS, JR.

As you can imagine, there has been a big turnover in personnel - both officer and enlisted. Below is a list of recent changes (May - June):

Transfers - Godspeed and smooth sailing!

J. H. BARRAZA	K. M. KELLY
R. L. BOHNERT	F. M. LACOSTA
B. J. BRADLEY	J. M. LOWDERMILK
J. S. CASSEL	F. N. MADUGNO
O. S. CERVANTES	J. J. MAGSAMEN
A. M. CHRISTENSEN	D. D. MCALEER
D. J. CLEMENT	D. T. MILLER
W. J. COTE	D. G. MOORE
LTJG D. C. CRAIG	L. F. NELSON
E. W. CRIPPIN	C. M. PALMER
CDR C. C. CULP, JR.	F. P. PANGELIIAN
J. M. DELMONTE	R. A. PEAK
C. N. DIXON	D. R. RUFF
T. E. ERDNER	J. A. SCHMELZER
F. F. FOURN	C. S. SHIPP
H. E. FRENCH	LT R. D. SISK
J. H. GARCIA	J. B. STANG
J. D. GUSTAVSON	J. P. STANKS
CAPT K. G. HAYNES	C. D. TSCHOEPE
E. R. HEEFNER	A. J. VALESE
B. P. HUFF	J. M. WALDRUFF
R. H. HUNT	G. T. WEBER
R. R. JAMIR	J. J. WHEELER
H. JONER	LT F. A. WHITE
	LT P. A. WILLIAMS, III

New Arrivals - Welcome Aboard!

M. D. ADAMS	K. J. HOLLAND	R. J. SOLIZ
J. M. ALLSUP	C. H. JOOST	N. R. SPAIN
R. W. BARR	W. D. KLUG	ENS R. R. SPRADLIN
J. A. BAIRD	D. KOLOD	J. STRICKLAND
B. A. CAMEERN	R. M. LANE	G. STROND
R. J. CASTELO	A. MARTINEZ	F. TAUANUU
M. C. CHRISTIAN	G. MCNAVY	J. F. TAYLOR
G. DEAL	D. B. MONSON	C. VANKIRK
M. DUNCAN	V. M. NARVAEZ	T. WILBURN
CAPT P. C. GIBBONS, JR.	D. K. PHEMISTER	J. YONKO
J. C. GILMOUR	L. D. PRESTRIDGE	J. YOUNGER
G. W. GLANN	B. PULOPOT	
J. M. GORDON	J. B. REYNOLDS	
V. GREENWOOD	P. ROBERTS	
R. G. HAGEN	M. C. SCHAUER	
B. HANNA	J. T. SEIGLER	
R. N. HAYWOOD		

The results of the February exams were happily received by many and congratulations go out to the men who will advance in rate. Following is a list of the men who have advanced (May - June):

WO1 APPLEBEE to CWO2
EM3 CANDIDO to EM2
EN3 CASSWELL to EN2
QM3 CASTLEBERRY to QM2
HT3 CHRISTENSEN to HT2
BM3 DUBBS to BM2
RD3 ERDNER to RD2
HT3 FOURNFOSTER to HT2
BM2 GREENAWAY to BM1
SM3 HENDERSON to SM2
BM3 ILHARRAMENDY to BM2

HT3 KRUMHOLT to HT2
RD3 MADUGNO to RD2
HT3 MEYER to HT2
MR3 MURPHY to MR2
MM3 PHELPS to MM2
HT3 PHILLIPS to HT2
HT3 PUHEK to HT2
BM3 RERKO to BM2
BM3 SCHOMMER to BM2
2nd LT SHI to 1st LT
MM3 WALTERS to MM2

STATISTICS

Since departing San Diego PROVIDENCE has:

Steamed 30,620.4 miles

Consumed 3,432,529 gallons of fuel

Consumed 4,667,583 gallons of water

Consumed food:

milk: 7,000 gals.

bread: 9,500 lbs.

meat: 60,000 lbs.

green vegetables: 10,000 lbs.

Received 12,158 lbs. of mail

Replenished at sea 23 times

Fired approximately 10,155 rds at 609 enemy targets