

USS JAMES E. KYES (DD787) 1 JAN 69 - 31 DEC 69

On 4 January 1969, USS JAMES E. KYES (DD787) got underway for the first time in the new year. 158 dependents and friends were aboard for KYES annual Dependents' Cruise. The flagship for Destroyer Squadron 23, KYES spent the day giving her friends and her crew a preview of later training and deployment evolutions.

Uptime 1-69, on 8-17 January, started the real thing. ASW exercises, underway training, and the other staples of the destroyer man's diet came to be familiar to KYES and the other members of Anti-Submarine Warfare Group I. January 9 and 10 KYES steamed independently, exercising at General Drills. 11 January she joined USS WATKINS (DD723) and began dual ship ASW exercises. 12 January WATKINS and KYES joined ASW Group I and the flagship USS KEARSARGE (CVS-33) for group ASW training.

KYES returned to port in Long Beach at the U. S. Naval Station on 18 January and remained until 3 February. 3-10 February saw her participate in Uptime 2-69, a second series of ASW exercises. The 11th to 24th were spent at Long Beach Naval Station and on 25 February, KYES was underway again for her final training exercise before deployment. DESRON 23 and ASW Group I participated in 10 days of training including surface warfare, Anti-Air Warfare, and Anti-Submarine Warfare utilizing single, dual and multiple ship formations.

March 7-17 was spent in port preparing for final gunnery exercise and deployment. KYES spent March 18-19 near San Clemente Island for gunnery practice. Electronics Counter Measures tests and exercises filled up the ship's routine. 20-29 March were spent in final preparations for Western Pacific deployment. At 1038 on 29 March, KYES departed pier 16, Long Beach Naval Station, for her 17th WestPac tour of duty.

KYES first port of call was Pearl Harbor. On April 4, "Jumpin' Jimmy" tied up to pier 23, U. S. Naval Station, Pearl Harbor. Named after an Australian Kangaroo she carried home as a gift to the San Diego Zoo, KYES seems to fulfill her nickname by being constantly on the go. By 7 April KYES was jumping again, undergoing her Operational Readiness Evaluation with ASW Group I. By 14 April pre-deployment preparations had been completed. On 17 April 1969, at 1808, USS JAMES E. KYES began the longest leg of her journey.

"Underway! Shift colors!" KYES was enroute Yokosuka, Japan.

26 April KYES arrived at U. S. Naval Station Yokosuka, Japan. After three days of resupply and upkeep she was underway once more, this time for Yankee Station, Gulf of Tonkin, in the company with USS KEARSARGE and elements of DESRON 23.

During transit KYES served as plane guard, ASW screen ship, and life guard ship for underway replenishment. On 4 May ASW Group I arrived on Yankee Station and at 2020 KYES entered the Hostile Fire Zone. KYES' 17th Western Pacific deployment had really begun. From 5 May KYES participated in various ASW exercises, including simulated and actual exercise weapon firings. On 5 May the submarine USS SPHINX (AGSS-489) arrived for joint training. On 15 May KYES completed her period of training and proceeded to Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines.

17-21 May KYES received her first look at Subic Bay and utilized the time for some necessary upkeep. On 22 May KYES transited to Manila Bay, Republic of the Philippines, where she joined in preparations for the joint SEATO exercise "Sea Spirit".

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