

U. S. S. GUIDE (MSO-447)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

21 July 1959

To all Friends and Dependents of the GUIDE:

Recently we passed the half-way point in our deployment in the Western Pacific; it is my wish at this time to review the past three months or so, with a word or two of the future.

The long voyage across the wide Pacific, 5,700 miles to be exact, was rather rough and our stops at Pearl Harbor and Midway Island were most welcome. While at Pearl Harbor most of us took tours of the lush, verdant island and basked on Wakiki Beach under the hot tropical sun. Midway, the home and lawful sanctuary of the strange Gooney Bird, was not so spectacular, but we enjoyed swimming at the pleasant beach and walking about the small island.

We arrived in Yokosuka, Japan (located on the island of Honshu) on 30 April. Although we worked hard there, getting the GUIDE back into shape again after the long arduous trip, we had plenty of time for recreation, too. Trips to Tokyo, Kamakura (where is located a famous Buddha statue over 60 feet high weighing over 200 tons and over 700 years old), Gohra (a peaceful Special Services rest hotel) and to other local places of interest were taken by GUIDE personnel. Many of us enjoyed hot Japanese baths - and the water was hot, believe me! We all became experts in bartering with Japanese shop owners for souvenirs to send home. On the trip across a contest had been held to design a ship's emblem. In Yokosuka, the winning entry, designed by Frederick H. KNAPP, EN2, was made into patches for the crew. The emblem appears on the cover sheet of this letter. After a short period of time we became accustomed to Japanese manners and traditions, learning to take off our shoes when entering tea houses, and grimly trying to look comfortable kneeling at low Japanese tables while sipping hot green tea. Expressions such as "Arigato" (Thank You) and "Konichiwa" (good afternoon) became familiar to all.

We were about to depart for Nagoya, a short distance South of Yokosuka, when we were called to an urgent search mission near an Air Force Target bombing range, north of Yokosuka, on the East Coast of Honshu. Bidding "Sayonara" to the other ships in Mine Division NINETY-THREE, we sped to the scene where a Navy plane had crashed in the water. Although the pilot had bailed out, we were called in to try to locate the aircraft underwater. During our week's efforts; we were assisted by no less than 3 helicopters (1 Air Force, 1 Navy, and 1 Marine) plus a fleet tug. The area of search was too big, however, and the information available too little, and our search was in vain. The GUIDE then departed the area to take part in a Mine Exercise, which the other ships in the Division had begun with Japanese Mine Sweepers, in Nagoya Bay. The operation was entirely successful, and it was interesting working with the Japanese Navy, hearing Japanese spoken over voice radio circuits. We found the Japanese to be experienced and capable sailors.

We then sailed for Sasebo, Japan, a large Naval Base located on the island of Kyushu, which is just south of Honshu. Following a short period of local operations just outside the harbor, we moved alongside the USS LUZON (ARG-2), a repair ship, for a two week stay. We found Sasebo to be a smaller town than Yokosuka, but equally enjoyable. Several personnel enjoyed a weekend stay at Unzen, a rest hotel located in a nearby mountain resort area; trips were made to nearby Nagasaki where in is located a museum depicting all the phases of the Atom. Many persons bought china and other gifts at a well-stocked Armed Forces store located just outside the base. During our stay there, we were honored to receive a visit from Captain R.O. BEER, U. S. N., now the Chief of Staff of Commander Mine Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet - the number two man! The high point of our Sasebo visit was the Ship's Party which was held on two evenings at a nearby Navy-recommended hotel. One hundred percent participation by the crew and the hard work of the Recreation Committee, headed by Robert G. GREENE, QM1, paid off; even guests from other ships remarked that the party was the best that they had ever attended. Assisting GREENE in planning and conducting the party were F.R. BAKER, BTL, R.O. EVENSEN, DCL, L.A. SANDS Jr., GM2, and D. G. LEVESQUE, BM2. A. G. SKRAMSTAD, US1, our chief cook, provided excellent food for all.

While in Sasebo, too, we received word that J. B. ZANE had been advanced to the new rate of Senior Engineman Chief, a distinct honor both for ZANE and for the ship. Added to this pleasure was the news of SKRAMSTAD'S advancement to Chief Commissaryman, effective January 1960. Hearty congratulations were in order, also, to the following men who reaped rewards for long hours spent studying for the advancement examinations - R. A. BLACKWELL to IC1; J. POCS Jr. to RM2; E. M. SCHAAN to SPP2; H. K. DUNHAM to BM3; H. E. WHARRY to BM3; J. E. POWELL to EM3; J. M. ERICKSON to EN3; W. P. HUND to EN3; F. W. SCHAUPP to ETR3; J.K. NEWLAND Jr. to SOG3; G.D. WASHINGTON Jr. to YN3; L. M. MORRISSEY to RM3; C.E. CARPENTER to RM3.

We sailed on 15 June, to Kagoshima, a small seaport southeast of Sasebo on the island of Kyusmu. Here our command of the Japanese language was hard-pressed; the port is not frequented by U.S. ships, and the natives speak little English. We managed to get about, however, and all had an enjoyable time though many were dampened considerably by a rain that persisted throughout most of our stay. The Division Commodore, LCDR W. A. STEADLEY, U.S.N., and the Commanding Officers of the ships spent much of the time enjoying the courtesy and friendship of local dignitaries who were most eager to make us feel at home. With some regret, we concluded our three day visit, and set sail for Keelung, Taiwan. Taiwan is what used to be called Formosa, and is located only 120 miles or so off the Chinese mainland. Though Keelung is not exactly kept scrupulously clean or odor-free, it provided us an opportunity to become acquainted with the Taiwanese (Chinese people born on Taiwan) and Chinese people. It is interesting to note that, because of the internal struggles on the mainland of China, there are now more Chinese people on Taiwan than Taiwanese themselves. The language and customs of these two peoples are different, largely because of occupation before and during World War II by the Japanese. The Japanese occupation of Taiwan evidently was a benevolent one, because Taiwanese often express surprising loyalty and respect for the Japanese people and customs.

During our stay in Keelung, many of us travelled the short distance to Taipei to enjoy recreational facilities furnished by the Military Assistance Advisory Group located there.

After a short two day visit, the GUIDE got underway for Kaohsiung, a major Naval Port, located on the southwest coast of Taiwan. After a restful weekend, we rolled up our sleeves for a week-long Mine Exercise with mine sweepers of the Chinese Nationalist Navy. We were unimpressed with seamanship displayed by the Chinese ships though it was sometimes difficult to understand them on voice radio circuits. The 4th of July celebration at Kaohsiung was one that will long remain a happy memory. The Kaohsiung Recreation Center Country Club (organized for all U.S. Military personnel in the area) was the site. The highlight of the evening was a fireworks display which brought many "oohs" and "aahs" from the audience. On the following day, the officers held a reception for the officers and wives of the Chinese Navy ships which had participated in the exercise. Again, the Division scored a "hit"; information received indicates that this was the first social affair in recent years given specifically for the Chinese Navy Officers. They and their wives came early and stayed late, which is evidence of their enjoyment of the reception. The Commodore was the recipient, for the Division, of the flag of the Chinese Naval Mine Force ships which took part in the exercise.

Then, off to Hong Kong, truly the "Pearl of the Orient". We missed you especially then, thinking of how you would enjoy the veritable shoppers paradise. Here "camera bugs" too, were in "Shangri-la"; from the Tiger Balm Gardens, resplendent with colorful gardens and exotic statuary, to the picturesque floating restaurants in Aberdeen Bay, there is virtually inexhaustible number of photographic subjects. Many of us took tours of the island, including the breathtaking cable car up the high peak which surmounts the island. The view of the city lights from this mountain top at night is certainly one that won't be forgotten easily. To guide our enjoyment of Hong Kong, missionary chaplains have established a Servicemen's Center on the waterfront from which information is available on all aspects of the city. Here also money can be exchanged (one U.S. dollar equals \$5.73 HK) and one can relax and have a soft drink.

In Hong Kong the U. S. Navy has established a "Purchasing Branch" where are represented all merchants "accredited" by the Navy. Through this showroom - displaying all kinds of articles, from materials to jade jewelry to hi fi sets - we were able to select gifts at lowest prices. The air conditioned restaurants scattered throughout the city provided a further delightful pleasure to our visit.

Just to indicate that our Hong Kong visit was not all spent on pleasures, "C" "E" BURNS, BML, and his Deck Force Diplomats conferred and bargained with Mary Soo, a local (but world famous among Navy ships) contractor to paint out much of the hull and many interior spaces. As a result, we left Hong Kong looking considerably rejuvenated.

From the Hong Kong visit, which was concluded just prior to the writing of this letter, we look forward to another period of repairs alongside the LUZON in Sasebo. This will be followed by a mine operation with the Korean Navy, one with only U.S. ships and then the final


two week "fixing up" period which precedes the long-awaited trip back to the States. We are looking forward to seeing most of you on the pier in Long Beach when we arrive about the middle of October.

The conduct of the GUIDE personnel has been excellent; we have been the subject of many favorable and flattering comments during our visits to Japanese and Chinese Ports. You can well be proud of your men aboard the GUIDE for the fine manner in which they have conducted themselves.

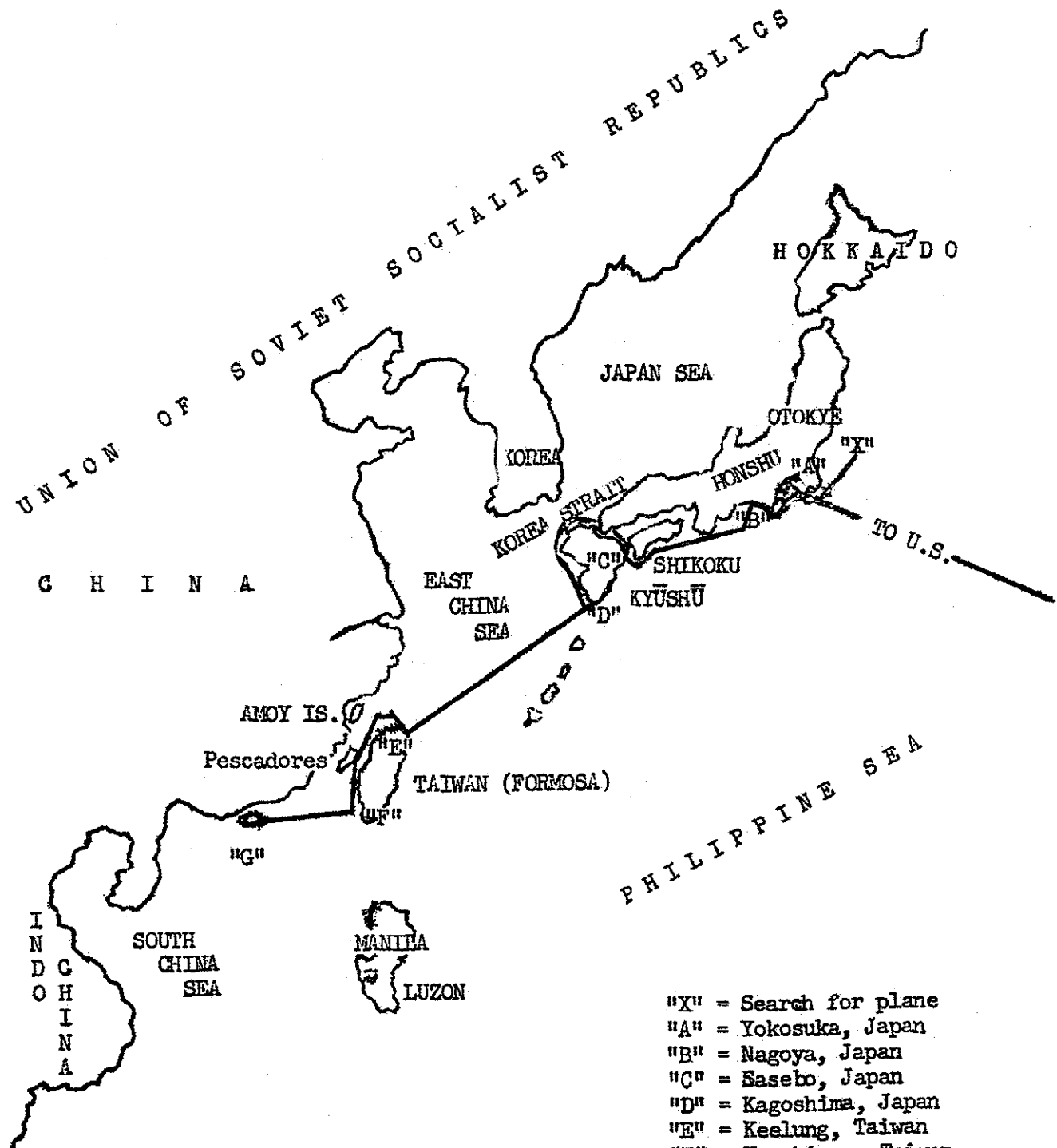
We have been doubly fortunate, too, in that none of you have had serious misfortune; it is agreed by us aboard the GUIDE that you wives and dependents deserve a vote of thanks for the capable way that you have managed the "home front" for us in our absence.

We have travelled some 3200 miles (as shown on the attached map) since our arrival in Yokosuka and will undoubtedly sail that much farther until it is time to set our sights for Long Beach and Home. To that date, we look forward, as I'm sure you do, with eager anticipation.

Sincerely



R. D. DUNCAN
Commanding Officer



- "X" = Search for plane
- "A" = Yokosuka, Japan
- "B" = Nagoya, Japan
- "C" = Sasebo, Japan
- "D" = Kagoshima, Japan
- "E" = Keelung, Taiwan
- "F" = Kaoshiung, Taiwan
- "G" = Hong Kong, B. C.