



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45)
FPO AP 96662-1733

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Ser 00/053
16 May 03

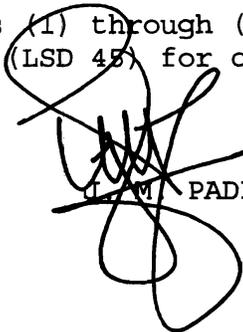
From: Commanding Officer, USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Naval Historical Center,
Washington Naval Yard, 901 M Street SE, Bldg 57, Washington,
DC, 20374-5060

Subj: 2002 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12H

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronological Sequence of Events
(3) Narrative/Significant Installations
(4) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
(5) Ship's Photograph
(6) Commanding Officer's Photograph/Biography

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (6) are forwarded as the command history for USS Comstock (LSD 45) for calendar year 2002.


J. M. PADFIELD

Copy to:
PAO

USS COMSTOCK COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

USS *Comstock* (LSD 45), UIC 21452, is the fifth ship of the *Whidbey Island* (LSD 41) class Dock Landing Ship and the fourth ship of the class to serve in the Pacific fleet. The mission of *Comstock* is to embark, deploy, land and support elements of a Marine Corps landing force in an assault by helicopters, a wide array of assault craft, and amphibious vehicles. To provide continuing support to the assault force, *Comstock* is equipped with an modern communication suite, state-of-the-art combat systems equipment, and an expertly trained crew.

CDR J. M. Padfield commands USS *Comstock*, which is assigned to Amphibious Group Three and supports Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable) based in Camp Pendleton, CA.

USS *Comstock's* immediate senior in command is Commander, Amphibious Group Three.

Enclosure (1)

Command Structure

Commanding Officer: CDR Sinclair M. Harris (through 06FEB02)
CDR Jonathan M. Padfield

Executive Officer: LCDR William J. Schmidt (through 18APR02)
LCDR Erik A. Norris

Command Master Chief: CMDCM (SW/AW/SS) Scott.D Shumway
(through 04MAR02)
CMDCM(SW/AW) Jim E. Delozier

Chief Engineer: LCDR Robert Rafford (through 30JUN02)
LCDR Mark W. Stewart

First Lieutenant: LT Kirk A. Knox (through 21NOV02)
LT Eric M. Manfull

Operations Officer: LT Eric V. Duke

Supply Officer: LT John G. Tencer

Medical Officer: LT Frank E. Mullens

Dental Officer: LT Andrew Avillo (through 02AUG02)
LT Hank R. Cole

CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
<u>JANUARY</u>	
Jan	Operation Enduring Freedom
18 Jan	OUTCHOP FIFTHFLT/INCHOP SEVENTHFLT
18-31 Jan	Transit to Fremantle, Australia
31 Jan	Change of Command
<u>FEBRUARY</u>	
01 Feb	Port Visit Fremantle, Australia
01-07 Feb	Transit to Sydney, Australia
08-12 Feb	Port Visit Sydney, Australia
13-22 Feb	Transit to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
18 Feb	OUTCHOP SEVENTHFLT/INCHOP THIRDFLT
23 Feb	Port Visit Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
24 Feb-01 Mar	Transit to Camp Pendleton, California
<u>MARCH</u>	
02 Mar	Anchored off Camp Pendleton for Offload 15 th MEU (SOC)
03 Mar	Embark Mini-Tigers en route to San Diego
04 Mar	Homecoming San Diego, CA
04-18 Mar	First Post Deployment Leave Period
18 Mar-01 Apr	Second Post Deployment Leave Period
12 Mar	E-5 Examination
13 Mar	ACU-5 Offload
18 Mar	AAV/ASIR
19 Mar	E-4 Examination
<u>APRIL</u>	
03 Apr	Fast Cruise
08 Apr	Underway Southern California
08 Apr	Ammunition offload Bravo Pier, North Island Naval Air Station, San Diego
08-12 Apr	SWOS PCO Visit - PCO USS TORTUGA (LSD 46)
09 Apr	Ammo Crossdeck to USS Rushmore
10-11 Apr	DLQ
12 Apr	Inport San Diego
15 Apr	Commence DPMA
18 Apr	Deadstick to Southwest Marine (Dry Dock)
29 Apr-10 May	SEMAT Assist
<u>MAY</u>	
07 May	Enter Dry Dock
20-24 May	Shipboard Team Training Course at Afloat Training Group

JUNE

06 Jun Medical LTT
05 Jun Engineering LTT
10-14 Jun ASIR Tech Assist Vist
10 Jun-07 Jul NAVSSI Lite Installation
19 Jun Undocking
24-28 Jun ASIR

JULY

03 Jul Crew moves back onto ship
10 Jul Dock Trials
15-18 Jul Sea Trials
19-26 Jul Corrosion Control Availability
22 Jul AAV LTT
Embark Midshipmen (CORTRAMID)
23 Jul SEA LTT
23-24 Jul Combat System Limited Team Training
22-26 Jul Pay and Personnel Assist Training and Limit Team Trng
PMT
26 Jul Aviation Readiness Evaluation
22-23 Jul 3M Limited Team Training
29 Jul-02 Aug Underway for Sea Trials II
Anchor
Ammunition Onload
DLQ's

AUGUST

02 Aug Moor NAVSTA San Diego
05-07 Aug Underway for CART II
08 Aug Inport
08 Aug Comstock night at the San Diego Padres Game
12-16 Aug Onboard Elevator Assessment and Training
16-18 Aug USMC Welcome aboard (MAGTF Platoons)
19-23 Aug Underway for Amphibious Operations Training (MAGTF 24)
23 Aug Moored NAVSTA San Diego
26-30 Aug Basic Amphibious Training

SEPTEMBER

03-07 Sep CART II/IA
09 Sep TSTA I
11 Sep EKMS Inspection
12 Sep E-5 Exam
13 Sep CPO Pinning Ceremony
13 Sep Officer Dining Out
16-20 Sep Underway for Engineering TSTA/BAT
Precision Anchorage
DLQ's with HC-3
E-4 Advancement Exam
LCAC Operations (Embark NBG-1)
20 Sep Moor NAVSTA 11 Berth 2
23 Sep COMPHIBRON ONE Embarks
23-27 Sep Combat Systems, Engineering, Topside Warfare

SEPTEMBER

26 Sep CPG-3 Battle "E" Presentation
30-04 Sep Underway for TSTA II

OCTOBER

01 Oct Amphibious Specialty Training - SOCAL
04 Oct Moor NAVSTA San Diego Pier 6 Berth 5
07-11 Oct Underway for Amphibious Specialty Training
TSTA Week 41 - SOCAL
10-11 Oct Transit to San Francisco
12-15 Oct Inport San Francisco Fleet Week
15-17 Oct Underway for TSTA Week 45
Nixie Stream
SAREX
Deceptive Lighting
16-17 Oct Transit to San Diego
18 Oct Inport
21-31 Oct Underway COMPTUEX-02 with Tarawa ARG

NOVEMBER

01 Nov Moored NAVSTA San Diego Pier 6 Berth 5
04-08 Nov Underway for TSTA 45
Precision Anchorage
Visit, Boarding, Search, and Seizure Exercise
SAREX
CIWS and RAM Certification
07-08 Nov Underway Demonstration
12-15 Nov Inport TSTA Week 46
12-15 Nov SMA
18-22 Nov Underway TSTA Week 47
21-22 Nov Final Evaluation Problem
22 Nov Moor NAVSTA Pier 11
25 Nov-06 Dec FMAV

DECEMBER

02-04 Dec Physical Readiness Test
02-04 Dec Force Protection Training 2
02-06 Dec FCIP (SPAWAR)
04-06 Dec 3M Baseline Assessment
09-10 Dec Corrosion Control
10 Dec SWOS PCO Ship Visit - PCO USS GERMANTOWN (LSD 42)
10-12 Dec Ammunition Onload Seal Beach
12 Dec Moor NAVSTA San Diego
13-23 Dec Holiday Stand down-1st leave period begins
14-20 Dec Corrosion Control Availability
16 Dec Deadstick to Pier 8 Berth 1
17 Dec Force Protection Exercise
16-31 Dec Navy Cash Install
19-20 Dec Hull Cleaning
23 Dec Holiday Standdown-2nd Leave Period Begins

Command Narrative

With the ship in Darwin, Australia at the beginning of a scheduled 6-month Western Pacific Deployment when the terrorist attacks of September 11th occurred, *Comstock* and *Peleliu* Amphibious Readiness Group's involvement in Operation Enduring Freedom was coming to a close when 2002 began. PELARG transited to Kuwait City to commence USMC backload in support of OEF, arriving 08 January. That evening, intelligence reports indicated the probability of a terrorist attack on PELARG was likely and the ARG sortied from port, anchoring approximately 10 nautical miles offshore. The vehicle wash-down and backload lasted four days without further incident.

With the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked, PELARG "out-chopped" Fleet AOR and turned over duties to USS *Bonhomme Richard* ARG on 18 January. With the turnover complete, the crew was excited and focused on the transit to Fremantle/Perth Australia for a well deserved port visit from 28-30 January. While in port, the prospective Commanding Officer, Commander Jonathan M. Padfield, reported for duty. Due to adverse weather and sea conditions south of Australia, PELARG's underway was delayed until the morning of 01 February.

From Fremantle/Perth the ship sailed to Sydney, Australia with PELARG. Commander Jonathan. M. Padfield relieved Commander Sinclair M. Harris as Commanding Officer on 06 February. The ship port called in Sydney, Australia 07 February but again, adverse weather conditions required PELARG to remain in Sydney an extra day. On 13 February, *Comstock* "out-chopped" 7th Fleet and "in-chopped" 3rd Fleet, en route Pearl Harbor, HI.

On 23 February, *Comstock* arrived in Pearl Harbor to refuel and embark family and friends of crew-members (TIGERS) for the transit back to San Diego, CA. On 24 February, the ship began the final leg of it's seven month deployment back to home port. One week later *Comstock* positioned in the vicinity Camp Pendleton, CA, and conducted the off-load of the 15th MEU. On 04 March, the crew was reunited with family

and friends at Naval Station, San Diego, having completed a dynamic and historic wartime deployment.

The following thirty days consisted of a post deployment leave and stand down period. During this period, the flight deck was certified by Commander, Naval Surface Forces Pacific (CNSP) during an Aviation Assist Visit (AAV).

On 08 April, the ship departed for B pier, North Island Naval Air Station, San Diego, CA, to off-load 42 Rolling Airframe Missiles (RAM). When the off-load was complete, *Comstock* anchored at Coronado Roads and conducted an ammunition cross-deck with USS *Rushmore* (LSD 47) 09 April. The next two days were spent assisting HC-11 and HC-3 helicopter squadrons in achieving their deck landing qualifications.

Shortly after returning to port (15-16 April), the ship de-fueled in preparation for a Dry-docking Phased Maintenance Availability (DPMA). On 18 April, the ship moved from Naval Station San Diego, to Southwest Marine shipyard to commence early repairs before the shipyard availability officially began. Though the ship was in port for depot level repairs, training continued for bridge watch standers with two sessions (22-23 April; 02-03 May) of ship handling training at Marine Safety International. On 08 May, the ship entered dry dock while undergoing a concurrent intermediate maintenance availability scheduled to last until 08 July.

Shipboard training continued throughout the DPMA. The ship's training team leaders completed a weeklong Shipboard Team Training (SBTT) course, hosted by Afloat Training Group Pacific (ATGPAC) from 20-25 May. Engineering Department conducted a Limited Team Trainer (LTT) 05-06 June, as did the Medical Department 06 May. Deck Department received a readiness assessment from CNSP in preparation for a Flight Deck Safety Inspection that occurred two weeks later (24-28 June). The ship undocked 19 June. 09 July, the crew completed a Fast Cruise in preparation for sea trials. DPMA was concluded 15 July and the ship conducted sea trials through 19 July.

During this complex 9 week DPMA, *Comstock* completed extensive repairs. Of particular note was the complete overhaul of three Main Propulsion Diesel Engines. Major installs included Television Direct to Sailors (TV-DTS), NAVSSI Lite navigation system, HYDRA wireless

communications system, and the USQ-T48(V) TSSS interface to allow the Battle Force Tactical Trainer (BFTT) to receive input and display information from the SPA-25G radar repeaters. Additional installs of note included the MK26/0 IPDS chemical detection system and the AN/URC-80 Bridge-to-Bridge radio. A renovation of berthing and messing spaces was also completed.

With the maintenance period complete, the crew turned their focus to preparing for the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART II). More LTTs were scheduled to include 3M, Combat Systems, Supply, and Seamanship. An Aviation Readiness Qualification was conducted 22 July, certifying the flight deck.

On 22 July the ship embarked midshipmen for Career Orientation and Training for Midshipman (CORTRAMID). The ship got underway 29 July to support this training and continue sea trials. During this period, an ammunition cross-deck was completed to on load ammunition in support of the inter-deployment training cycle. On 31 July, *Comstock* supported deck-landing qualifications for HC-3 and became the first LSD to ever land the SH-60S helicopter.

On 05 August, Commander Naval Beach Group One conducted CART developing a baseline from which to train amphibious boat control and well deck handling teams. On the same day, Commander, Amphibious Squadron One (Captain Kenneth E. Golden) assumed operational control of *Comstock* by establishing the USS *Boxer* Amphibious Readiness Group. Classroom training on amphibious operations occurred from 26-30 August, supporting the practical training received by participating in Amphibious Operational Training (AOT) with COMPHIBRON ONE and Marine Air Ground Task Force Twenty Four from 12-23 August.

September began a robust training period scheduled to last through the end of the year. The first week, 03-07 September, established the training baseline for *Comstock* when ATG conducted CART II. On 16 September, Commander, Amphibious Squadron One completed the navigation check ride. The following Monday, the Tailored Ship Training Availability (TSTA) commenced in port. The ensuing weeks consisted of underway engineering and topside warfare training, followed by combat systems and engineering in port. Baseline force protection training was conducted 23-24 September.

October was a whirlwind of training and operations. CNBG-1 Amphibious Specialty Training was conducted 30 September - 09 October. On 09 October, Amphibious Squadron One conducted the Communications Readiness Certification (and CCC-19-SF). *Comstock* transited with *Boxer* and *Cleveland* (BOXARG) to San Francisco, CA, as a participant in "Fleet Week" from 12-15 October. Immediately upon returning to San Diego, *Comstock* was assigned to support *Tarawa* ARG during their COMPTUEX (21-30 October) as a replacement for another ship in the group, gaining invaluable experience in multi-ship amphibious operations.

November was the culmination of the bulk of basic phase training, marking the completion of several major events. 04-06 November was dedicated to air warfare; most notably the first ever use of the Fleet Training Round (FTR) simulating the launch of a RAM during the AW-11C-SF exercise. Following this successful engagement, the engineers scored a victory of their own with a highly successful Underway Demonstration from 07-08 November achieving above average marks. Supply Department completed the Supply Management Assessment (SMA) and received such outstanding remarks that it was upgraded to Inspection Certification. The previous nine weeks of training by ATGPAC paid dividends when each of the training teams and watch standers passed the Final Evaluation Problem from 21-22 November. The last week of the month was spent in port conducting necessary upkeep.

Although December was originally scheduled for a three week Christmas stand-down period, it was abbreviated so *Comstock* could prepare for a short notice deployment supporting of Operation Enduring Freedom and contingency operations. This unexpected change in plans necessitated rescheduling exercises and training events so the ship and crew were prepared to deploy in early January, 2003. The first week consisted of the Physical Readiness Test (02-04 December) while concurrently conducting command wide force protection training. The 3M Baseline Assessment occurred over a three-day period, from 04-06 December. The next week marked a significant accomplishment as a five day on-load of ammunition at Seal Beach, CA, was accomplished in less than three days. The actual on load took only 10 hours to complete. During the week of 16 December, the ship participated in a Force

Protection exercise hosted jointly by Commander, Third Fleet and ATGPAC from 17-18 December. A hull cleaning was conducted 19-20 December. This month also marked the installation of the Navy Cash System.

2002 was an extremely busy year for the crew of USS *Comstock*. It was full of challenges but in every instance the crew responded with magnificent performance. The capstone was the preparations to ship and crew that culminated in a very short notice deployment with COMPHIBRON ONE to the Northern Arabian Gulf to execute operation Iraqi Freedom. In every instance, under every condition, *Comstock* sailors provided service to the Navy and Country and exemplified the ship's motto of "teamwork, drive, courage."