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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS GRAPPLE (ARS-53)
C/O FPO NEW YORK, NEW YORK 09570-3223

5750
SER 03181
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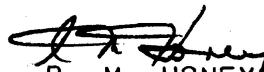
From: Commanding Officer, USS GRAPPLE (ARS 53)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-098H)

Subj: **COMMAND HISTORY OF USS GRAPPLE (ARS 53)**

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) USS GRAPPLE (ARS 53) Command History for 1990

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded to accordance with referance (a).


R. M. HONEY

**USS GRAPPLE (ARS 53) COMMAND HISTORY
FOR 1990**

I. Command Composition and Organization

a. The primary mission of the USS GRAPPLE (ARS 53) is salvage and rescue of damaged vessels. To accomplish this the GRAPPLE is capable of debeaching stranded vessels, heavy lift from ocean depths, open ocean towing, manned diving operations to a depth of 190 feet, off ship firefighting and performing emergency repairs to damaged vessels.

b. (1) Immediate Senior in Command: Commander, Combat Support Squadron EIGHT, Commander Alan W. Nibbs, U.S. Navy.

(2) Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Commander Robert M. Honey, U.S. Navy.

(3) Homeport: Little Creek, Virginia.

II. CHRONOLOGY

HOLIDAY LEAVE AND UPKEEP; LITTLE CREEK, VA	01-08 JAN
DIVER'S TRAINING/PORT VISIT, BERMUDA	09-18 JAN
DRYDOCKING AFDM SUSTAIN; NORFOLK, VA	25 JAN-07 FEB
UNDOCKED-SEA TRAILS	08 FEB
TRANSIT TO ROTA, SP	21 FEB-06 MAR
INCHOPPED COMSIXTHFLT	06 MAR
TURNOVER MEDITERRANEAN SALVAGE SHIP DUTIES WITH USS HOIST; ROTA, SP	06-09 MAR
SALVAGE OPERATION, USS HARRY E. YARNELL ANCHOR; MENTON, FR	10-20 MAR
TARGET TOW SERVICES NATIONAL WEEK 90B	23-27 MAR
TRAINING ANCHORAGE; AUGUSTA BAY, SI	28-30 MAR
LOCAL OPERATIONS; NAPLES, IT	02-04 APR
DMAT; NAPLES, IT	05-09 APR
INPORT; NAPLES, IT	10-12 APR
INPORT; AUGUSTA BAY, SI	14 APR

TRANSIT TO WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN	15-18 APR
REPLENISHMENT AT SEA WITH USNS SIRIUS	16 APR
TRAINING ANCHORAGE; ALGHERO, SARDINIA	19-22 APR
INPORT; PALMA DE MALLORCA, SP	24-28 APR
VERTICAL REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS SIRIUS	29 APR
TARGET TOW SERVICES FOR CTF 60.8	02 MAY
FUELING AT SEA WITH USS SAVANNAH	02 MAY
INPORT; CATANIA, IT	03-09 MAY
TARGET BUOY MOOR RECOVERY OPERATIONS; PACHINO, SI	10-14 MAY
DAMSEL FAIR 90-1 MINE RECOVERY OPERATIONS	15-17 MAY
INPORT; AUGUSTA BAY, IT	18-21 MAY
INPORT; ASHDOD, IS	27 MAY-01 JUN
TARGET SLED ONLOAD; AUGUSTA BAY, SI	05 JUN
IMAV WITH USS SIERRA; GAETA, IT	06-20 JUN
REPLENISHMENT AT SEA WITH USS CONCORD	20 JUN
TARGET TOW SERVICES FOR CTG 60.8	21-23 JUN
TARGET BUOY MOOR RECOVERY/REPOSITIONING; PACHINO, SICILY	25-27 JUN
INPORT; AUGUSTA BAY, SICILY	28-29 JUN
INPORT; AJACCIO, CORSICA	02-09 JUL
REPLENISHMENT AT SEA WITH USS CONCORD	10 JUL
TRAINING ANCHORAGE/PORT VISIT; CALVI, CORSICA	11-20 JUL
TURN OVER OF MEDITERRANEAN SALVAGE SHIP DUTIES TO	

USS RECOVERY; MALAGA, SPAIN	22-26 JUL
BRIEF STOP FOR FUEL ROTA, SPAIN	27 JUL
TRANSIT TO ST. GEORGES, BERMUDA	27 JUL-03 AUG
OPERATIONAL PROPULSION PLANT EXAMINATION	04-06 AUG
TRANSIT TO LITTLE CREEK, VA	07-10 AUG
POST DEPLOYMENT STAND DOWN/UPKEEP	10 AUG-05 SEP
PORT VISIT U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY; ANNAPOLIS, MD	07-11 SEP
DIVING SAFETY SURVEY; LITTLE CREEK, VA	17 SEP
AMMO OFFLOAD/DEPENDENT'S CRUISE; YORKTOWN, VA	18 SEP
READY DUTY SALVAGE	20 SEP-15 OCT
FULL POWER RUN, DEGAUSSING RUN, NAVIGATION	
CERTIFICATION, CART PHASE II	21 SEP
CMS INSPECTION; LITTLE CREEK, VA	24 SEP
3M INSPECTION; LITTLE CREEK, VA	02 OCT
SALVAGE TRAINING; FIRE AT SEA	10-11 OCT
IN PORT LITTLE CREEK FOR HURRICANE LILI	11-14 OCT
PMA/IMAV, MARINE HYDRAULICS INTERNATIONAL, NORFOLK AND SIMA	
LITTLE CREEK	18 OCT-04 DEC
FAST CRUISE	04 DEC
SEA TRIALS, VACAPES	06 DEC
INCLINING EXPERIMENT; LITTLE CREEK, VA	07 DEC
HOLIDAY LEAVE AND UPKEEP	14-31 DEC

III. Narrative

Following GRAPPLE's 1989/1990 holiday leave and upkeep period at Little Creek, Virginia, GRAPPLE sailed for Bermuda on 9 January for diver's training and a port visit in St Georges, Bermuda. Upon return to Little Creek, GRAPPLE entered the

drydock SUSTAIN (AFDM-7) at Naval Station Norfolk, VA on 25 January and remained there until 7 February, completing repairs for the upcoming Mediterranean deployment. GRAPPLE undocked on 8 February, conducted sea trails and returned to Little Creek.

On 21 February GRAPPLE departed Little Creek, bound for Rota, Spain, to commence a six month Mediterranean deployment. GRAPPLE arrived at Rota on 6 March and turned over with the USS HOIST (ARS 40), assuming duties as the Sixth Fleet's salvage ship. GRAPPLE remained at Rota until 9 March, at which time the ship proceeded into the Mediterranean and to Menton, France to conduct the location and recovery of USS HARRY E. YARNELL's (CG 17) bow anchor and chain. After searching the Menton harbor for five days, utilizing a hawking anchor and a side scan sonar, operated by a support team from Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit Two, the anchor and chain was located in 165 feet of water. The anchor and chain were recovered on 19 March.

After completing this salvage operation, GRAPPLE sailed for Augusta Bay, Sicily to provide target tow services during National Week 90B, from 23 to 27 March. GRAPPLE then entered Augusta Bay to return USS HARRY E. YARNELL's anchor and chain to the YARNELL and to conduct a training anchorage in preparation for an upcoming Diesel Mobile Assessment Team (DMAT) visit.

GRAPPLE sailed for Naples, Italy on 30 March, where more training was conducted for the DMAT visit, which was held 5-9 April. After successfully completing the DMAT visit, GRAPPLE remained in Naples until 12 April for a port visit.

On 13 April GRAPPLE set sail for Alghero, Sardinia. Enroute a stop was made 14 April at Augusta Bay, Sicily to onload the Williams target sled and an underway replenishment was conducted with the USNS SIRIUS (T-AFS 8) on 16 April. GRAPPLE arrived at Alghero on 19 April and remained there in a training anchorage performing diver's training until 22 April. GRAPPLE then proceeded to Palma De Mallorca for a port visit, arriving on 24 April.

GRAPPLE departed Palma on 28 April, heading for the western Mediterranean. On 29 April GRAPPLE conducted a vertical replenishment with USNS SIRIUS, then, on 2 May, a fueling at sea evolution with the USS SAVANNAH (AOR 4). Following the replenishment GRAPPLE arrived in Catania, Sicily for a seven day port visit. On 10 May GRAPPLE proceeded to Pachino, Sicily, to recover the Pachino target buoy moor. The search was abandoned after four days however, due to a scheduled mine recovery operation off Sardinia.

The mine recovery operation off Sardinia was completed on 17 May and GRAPPLE headed for Augusta Bay for a port visit, arriving on 18 May and departing on 21 May. GRAPPLE then sailed for Ashdod, Israel for a port visit, from 27 May to 1 June.

Following the Ashdod port visit, GRAPPLE sailed for Gaeta, Italy to conduct a maintenance availability with the USS SIERRA (AD 18); stopping enroute in Augusta Bay to onloaded the target sled, arriving at Gaeta on 5 June. GRAPPLE remained in Gaeta until 20 June.

On 20 June GRAPPLE departed Gaeta and conducted a replenishment at sea with the USS CONCORD (AFS 5), then continued on to the western Mediterranean to provide target tow services for Commander, Task Group 60.8, from 21-23 June. GRAPPLE then returned to Pachino, Sicily on 25 June and recovered the Pachino target buoy moor and repositioned the new Pachino target buoy.

Following this successful salvage operation, GRAPPLE returned to Augusta Bay to drop off the target sled, then sailed for Ajaccio, Corsica for a port visit. On 10 July GRAPPLE conducted another underway replenishment with USS CONCORD, then arrived in Calvi, Corsica for diver training and a port visit. GRAPPLE departed Calvi on 20 July and headed for Malaga, Spain, to turn over the duties as the Sixth Fleet salvage ship with the USS RECOVERY (ARS 43).

GRAPPLE turned over with the USS RECOVERY on 26 July and departed the Mediterranean. GRAPPLE stopped at Rota, Spain on 27 July for fuel, then started the transit for Little Creek. Enroute to Little Creek GRAPPLE stopped in St Georges, Bermuda on 4 August for a short notice Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE). After successfully passing the OPPE, GRAPPLE continued it's transit to Little Creek, arriving on 10 August.

Following a post deployment stand down from 10 August to 5 September, GRAPPLE made a port visit at the United States Naval Academy, from 7 to 11 September. GRAPPLE returned to Little Creek on 11 September and conducted a diving safety survey on 17 September and offloaded ammunition and demolition at Yorktown Naval Weapons Station on 18 September, in preparation for an upcoming shipyard availability. On 21 September GRAPPLE got underway for a full power run demonstration, a degaussing run, a navigation certification and to complete CART Phase II. Commander, Combat Logistics Group II conducted a surprise CMS inspection on 24 September, which was passed successfully, and Commander Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Atlantic Fleet conducted a short notice 3M inspection on 2 October, which was also passed successfully.

GRAPPLE conducted a fire at sea evolution on 10 October off of Little Creek, then proceeded into the VACAPES operation area for diver's training; which was canceled due to heavy weather. GRAPPLE remained in port in Little Creek from 11 to 14 October, making preparations for the possible landfall of hurricane Lili in the Hampton Roads area. Hurricane Lili, however, dissipated at sea and never made landfall.

On 18 October GRAPPLE entered Marine Hydraulics International shipyard at Norfolk, Virginia and began a seven week maintenance availability. GRAPPLE departed the shipyard on 6 December, conducted sea trials in the Virginia Capes operation area, then returned to Little Creek to conduct an inclining experiment on 7 December.

GRAPPLE completed 1990 with a holiday leave and upkeep period at Little Creek.