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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS KEARSARGE (LHD 3)

FPO AE 09534-1662

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5724

From: Commanding Officer, USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1995

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3) 1995 Command History

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded in accordance with reference (a).

A. F. LORD
By direction

USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3) COMMAND HISTORY
CALENDAR YEAR 1995

Command Composition and Organization:

Mission: To load, transport and land troops and their equipment.

Organizational Structure:

Commander Amphibious Group Two
Rear Admiral Wirt R. Fladd

Commanding Officer
Captain Christopher W. Cole

Executive Officer
Captain William J. Ungarvarsky

Command Master Chief
OSCM(SW) Tim C. Minor

Ship's Homeport: Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia

Chronology:

January

11 - Completed first pre-deployment CAMSEE inspection, graded "Outstanding." AIMD completed NALCOMIS training with NAVMASSO/CNAL. SIMA certified Ejection Seat Storage Area Magazine Sprinkler System.

13 - Captain Christopher W. Cole assumed command of USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3). OSCM(SW) Tim C. Minor assumed duties as USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3) Command Master Chief Petty Officer. AIMD maintained 97.5 percent RFI rate on assigned Support Equipment.

15 - AIMD workcenter 610 reached 100 percent full mission capable. AIMD workcenter 640 reached 90 percent capability.

19-25 - Navy-Marine workups. JTFEX (19 Jan.-6 Feb.)

25 - Completed first Medical Readiness Evaluation with an overall score of C-1. Successfully completed first Joint Mass Casualty and Neo-Ops Exercise.

26 - SOCEX (26 Jan.-6 Feb.)

February

6 - Combat System Readiness Review Phase I and II onboard KEARSARGE (6-21 Feb.) AIMD NOAP Laboratory fully operational.

March

14 - 24 MEU vehicle onload completed.

17 - 24 MEU personnel onload completed (17-18 Mar.).

21 - Fleet Surgical Team Four reported aboard for deployment.

22 - USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3) departed for Maiden deployment.

24 - ARM-200 Test Stand installed.

25 - USS KEARSARGE (Communications Department) Detachment Alfa established at NAVCOMTELCOMSTA Sicily, Italy.

April

2 - USS KEARSARGE activated communication circuits for COMSIXTHFLT operations. KEARSARGE conducted Safety Standdown for Fight Deck Operations and Electrical Safety Training on CCTV.

4 - USS KEARSARGE inchopped to COMSIXTHFLT.

5 - USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3) arrived in Rota, Spain for turnover with USS NASSAU. Port visit Rota, Spain (5-10 Apr.)

9 - Successfully completed Exercise WHITE PINNACLE.

11 - Port visit - Malaga, Spain (11-15 Apr.) First surgery (appendectomy) performed aboard.

17 - Participated in Spanish Phiblex (17-23 Apr.), that included total off-load and backload of 24 MEU vehicles. KEARSARGE Deck Department personnel trained Spanish personnel during bilateral well deck amphibious operations.

21 - Radm Wirt R. Fladd assumed command of Commander Amphibious Group Two.

22 - Secretary of Navy, Honorable John H. Dalton, visited KEARSARGE.

24 - Port visit - Alicante, Spain (24-29 Apr.).

May

1 - Participated in exercise Destined Glory 95 (1-11 May), that included complete off-load and backload of all 24 MEU vehicles.

2 - AIMD Workcenter 41R inducted and issued first T700-GE-700 engine.

4 - Walking Blood bank activated. More than 50 units of blood collected.

12 - Port visit - Marseille, France (12-16 May). VIP visit of American Legion personnel and included a cultural exchange tour of Chateau de. Successfully completed exercise WHITE PINNANCLE.

20 - Air department reached 5,000th Mishap Free Landings milestone.

24 - Participated in exercise TRIDENTE (24-26 May), that included complete off-load and backload of all 24 MEU vehicles (TRIDENTE exercise cut short 26 May).

25 - ABC Television News Correspondent, John McWethy visited KEARSARGE enroute to the Sardinia Range.

26 - Received National Tasking and proceeded to Adriatic Sea, in support of U.S. National Policy and the United Nations Bosnian mission.

29 - Arrived Adriatic Sea.

31 - CTF61 and CTF62 hosted a Joint Task Force Provide Promise/CINCSOUTH Planning Conference for 21 Flag Officers aboard KEARSARGE.

June

1 - Continued Adriatic Sea operations. KEARSARGE hosted 18 members of the news media that included representatives from NBC, BBC, AP, Reuters, and WTN news services (1-2 Jun.).

2 - KEARSARGE Amphibious Ready Group put on 24 hour TRAP Alert after Captain Scott O'Grady, USAF, was shot down while flying his F-16 fighter jet over Bosnia. 24 MEU TRAP assumed Alert Posture. Air Department reached 1,000,000th gallon of JP-5 fuel pumped since the ship's commissioning.

8 - Embarked 24 MEU aircraft rescued Captain O'Grady during a pre-dawn TRAP mission. Captain O'Grady received medical treatment in the ship's Medical Department. After the O'Grady rescue, KEARSARGE hosted a press conference on its flightdeck for 23 media representatives from ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN. WTN, Reuters, AP, L.A. Times and the Washington Post.

9 - O'Grady received a telephone call from the President of the United States -- President William (Bill) Clinton. Captain O'Grady departed KEARSARGE in the company of Air Force Lt.Gen. Ryan.

10 - Port visit - Trieste, Italy (10-13 May).

14 - Continued Adriatic Sea operations. AIMD provided structural repair assist on aircraft battle damaged from small arms fire during the rescue of Capt. Scott O'Grady, USAF, from Bosnia.

21 - Port visit - Naples, Italy. (21-27 Jun.).

24 - USO 'Gala Celebration' hosted aboard USS KEARSARGE.

28 - Returned to Adriatic Sea for operations. Air Department reached 1,000,000th gallon of JP-5 fuel pumped since the start of the ship's Maiden deployment.

July

1 - Continued presence in Adriatic Sea.

3 - KEARSARGE rescued two men (one Italian and one Albanian) whose boat was adrift and in distress in the Adriatic Sea. The two men were transferred to an Italian Coast Guard Cutter outside the harbor of Brindisi, Italy.

4 - KEARSARGE conducted a Sunset Ceremony that honored the 'Original 13 States,' and the Nation's 219th Birthday.

7 - KEARSARGE Supply Department wins 'Best Sales and Service Award.'

10 - KEARSARGE rescued four Italian Nationals from their distressed boat in the Adriatic Sea. They were transferred to an Italian pleasure boat that was carrying a member of the Italian Coast Guard. Successfully handled Exercise WHITE PINNACLE.

12 - Port visit - Corfu, Greece (12-15 Jul.).

17 - Participated in exercise Albanian SAREX (Rescue Eagle, 17-21 Jul.) that included a total off-load and backload of 24 MEU vehicles. Deck Department personnel provided familiarization tours and briefings for senior Albanian Naval Officials that included Commander Naval Forces Albania, Commander (Albania) Bureau of Personnel, and the Albania equivalent of Fleet and Unit (Force) Commanders.

19 - Successfully completed Exercise WHITE PINNACLE from CTF 61.

21-23 - A news team from CBS Television Affiliate in Charleston, S.C. interviewed Sailors and Marines who are from southern North Carolina and South Carolina areas. While aboard, the media interviewed Rhode Island natives for broadcast by the CBS Television affiliate in Providence, R.I. Dr. Mary Pat Kelly embarked KEARSARGE to conduct background research for documentary-style book on role of the Navy-Marine team played in the O'Grady rescue.

31 - Port visit - Valletta, Malta (31 Jul. - 3 Aug.). Hosted reception for Maltese Government Officials, the U.S. Ambassador and Embassy officials and various members of the local diplomatic corps.

August

3 - Resumed presence in Adriatic Sea.

13 - ABC Television news magazine 'Prime Time Live' embarked and interviewed Sailors and Marines involved in the rescue of Captain Scott O'Grady, show was aired in November.

19 - Ship's Corpsman, HM1 Glenn Messier and HM3 John Thornton accompanied FST entry into Croatia for attempted casualty assistance to United Nations Peace Negotiators who were injured in an accident.

21 - Port visit - Corfu, Greece (21-24).

27 - Conducted first ever refueling of U.S. Navy Patrol Crafts (Sirroco and Typhoon) by a combatant.

28 - Air Department reached 10,000th Mishap Free Landings Milestone.

29 - Port visit - Barcelona, Spain (29 Aug.- 1 Sep.).

September

4-8 - Port visit - Rota, Spain that included 24 MEU equipment and vehicle washdown.

6 - Communications Department successfully completed the Type Commander's Comprehensive Communication Exercise with a grade of 96.65 percent, and ship nominated for second consecutive Green 'E' Award for Communications Excellence.

7 - USS KEARSARGE (Communications Department) Detachment Alfa disestablished at Sicily, Italy.

9 - USS KEARSARGE outchopped from COMSIXTHFLT. Conducted turnover with USS WASP (LHD-1).

16 - In preparation for returning to homeport, a Virginia State Police Trooper embarked and conducted Virginia Traffic Laws and Safety Procedures Lectures aboard.

20 - Started off-load 24 MEU personnel in Onslow Bay, N.C. Capt. O'Grady returned to KEARSARGE to present te ship a Letter of Appreciation from former President Ronald Reagan.

21 - Secretary of the Navy, Honorable John H. Dalton, arrived onboard and presented KEARSARGE the Navy Unit Commendation for actions in the rescue of Capt. O'Grady.

22 - USS KEARSARGE returned to homeport. Prior to arriving the ship conducted Well Deck operations in support of 'Tiger Cruise.' Conducted post deployment standdown (first period, 22 Sep.- 6 Oct.)

October

6 - Conducted post deployment leave and upkeep (second period, 6 Oct.- 15 Oct.)

November

2 - Navy Safety Center conducted first ship-wide safety survey aboard USS KEARSARGE.

3 - KEARSARGE hosted Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Dr. Marvin J. Langston, visit.

4 - LHD-3 Consolidated Calibration Conference held. Representatives of the conference selected USS KEARSARGE's Consolidation Instruction as a template for the TYCOM instruction.

6 - Aviation Pre-Availability Inspection.

8 - KEARSARGE hosted National Security Industrial Association visit.

10-13 - Port visit - In New York City for participation in New York City's Veterans Day Parade march down 5th Avenue in Manhattan.

12 - Successfully completed Exercise WHITE PINNACLE.

14-17 - Port visit Newport, Rhode, Island for Navy schools. KEARSARGE hosted SWOCOLCOM training visit.

29 - USS KEARSARGE nominated COMPHIBGRU Two for second consecutive Golden Anchor Award.

December

1 - KEARSARGE hosted U.K. Joint Service Defense College visit.

3 - Deck Department personnel decorated two 'small' boats to enter in the City of Norfolk's 'Lighted Boat Parade.'

11-14 - Ammunition off-loaded in preparation for a four-month Selected Restricted Availability period at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, Va. Off-loaded Landing Force Operational Reserve Materiel (LFORM).

12 - AIMD received Naval Safety Center Aviation Maintenance Team Assist Visit.

14 - AIMD Support Equipment Division off-loaded support equipment and crash crane to St. Julien's Creek and Public Works Center for rework Flightdeck de-certified when crash crane removed.

21 - NAVSEA Mine Warfare Indoctrination Visit.

22 - USS KEARSARGE's rescue of Captain Scott O'Grady placed eighth on the Associated Press Newswire Service's Top 10 News Stories of the Year.

Narrative:

At the beginning of this reporting period, Kearsarge (LHD-3) was preparing for her maiden deployment. Captain Christopher W. Cole, USN, assumed command of KEARSARGE January 13, 1996.

Departing March 22 for a six-month deployment, KEARSARGE and its Amphibious Ready Group conducted numerous joint exercises that included the countries of Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, Greece, France and Turkey, Germany and Albania.

On June 2, KEARSARGE Amphibious Ready Group put on 24 hour Alert after the shootdown of Air Force Captain Scott O'Grady. Six days later, O'Grady rescued during a pre-dawn rescue by forces embarked aboard USS KEARSARGE.

After the rescue of O'Grady, KEARSARGE received increased attention and embark from the international news media.

In July, KEARSARGE Supply Department won 'Best Sales and Service Award.'

In December, the KEARSARGE was nominated by COMPHIBGRU Two for second consecutive Golden Anchor Award. Preparing for its first Selected Restricted Availability (SRA) period at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, KEARSARGE off-loaded Support Equipment and Flightdeck Crane to St. Julien's Creek.

USS KEARSARGE's rescue of Captain Scott O'Grady placed eighth on the Associated Press Newswire Service's Top 10 News Stories of the Year.