



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS PONCE (LPD-15)
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From: Commanding Officer, USS PONCE (LPD 15)
To: Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, DC

Subj: REQUEST FOR ANNUAL COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) Your ltr 5757 Ser 09BH/SH/506636 of 24 Aug 90
(b) OPNAVINST 5750.12E of Jan 90

Encl: (1) USS PONCE (LPD 15) Command History for ~~1990~~ 1989

1. In response to reference (a) and in compliance with reference (b), our Command History for ~~90~~ 90 is hereby forwarded as enclosure (1).


H. J. MEYERS
By direction

Command History for 1989

The USS PONCE (LPD-15) is the newest of a versatile class of amphibious assault ships, the Amphibious Transport Dock. It combines the troop carrying capability of the LPA, the floodable well deck and landing craft capability of the LSD and the helicopter operating deck of the LPH. PONCE, when loaded, carries a balanced unit of 923 Marines, their combat vehicles (tanks, artillery, LVT, etc.) and their combat cargo (ammunition, fuel, etc.) thus maintaining the combat integrity of assault forces during extended deployment. Using a ballast system much like that of a submarine, the floodable well deck allows beach assault by amphibious landing craft launched from PONCE's stern. Tactical flexibility is reflected in PONCE's ability to employ the concept of "vertical envelopment". Using the large flight deck to launch helicopters, a rapid attack of the enemy on her flanks and rear is possible.

PONCE is under the command of Amphibious Squadron Twelve. USS PONCE is commanded by Captain A. B. MOSER, LCDR D. E. Phillips is the executive officer. Department Heads are: Deck---LCDR Combs, Operations---LCDR Parker, Engineering---LT Lake, Administration/Navigation---LT Parker, Supply---LT Sorenson, Medical---LCDR Hamburg.

For the USS PONCE (LPD-15), 1989 was a year spent either underway, in the shipyard, or undergoing various inspections. PONCE began 1989 with holiday stand down at Naval Station Norfolk. On 19 January, the Proud Lion off-loaded fuel at Craney Island and proceeded to Metro Shipyard Portsmouth where she remained for the next four months.

On 16 May, PONCE left the shipyard for underway trials and then tied up at Norfolk's Waterside for Armed Forces Day on 19 May. Several thousand people from the Tidewater area came to tour the ship dressed out in holiday colors.

PONCE proceeded to Whiskey Anchorage from 22 May to 26 May for an ammo onload. She then spent Memorial Day weekend at Norfolk, remaining there until 18 June.

Onslow Bay was the next stop, where PONCE held amphib ops at Onslow Bay, North Carolina. PONCE served as visit ship upon returning to Norfolk June 25th, welcoming and providing ship tours for hundreds of curious visitors. She then embarked midshipmen for summer training.

The month of July was spent in the Gulf of Mexico where PONCE was involved with Law Enforcement Operations in conjunction with the Coast Guard. PONCE embarked a small rigid raider craft and a Coast Guard Dolphin helicopter detachment. After a week and a half of sweltering underway time, PONCE pulled into Key West, Florida for liberty. It was in Key West that the Midshipmen were debarked. PONCE continued it's LEO for another week before pulling into Miami for a few days, then headed back home to Norfolk.

PONCE was inport Norfolk from 26 August to 04 September. The Command Inspection of 31 August was a complete success for PONCE. As soon as this inspection was complete, PONCE headed out once again for the Onslow Bay OpArea for well-deck LCU operations. On the 15th of August, after only three days inport Norfolk, PONCE embarked a detachment of SEALs. The SEALs, along with Air Force units, practiced high speed boat operations and ship boarding techniques. PONCE also tested out its new expanded flight deck capability with four additional landing spots (added to the already existing two), and with newly installed blue deck-level lights.

The day after Labor Day, PONCE went out to sea once again. This time, however, amphib operations had to be called off due to hurricane weather. PONCE pulled into Little Creek for IMAV.

After the IMAV, PONCE spent October preparing for it's upcoming INSURV inspection held the week of 23 October. INSURV found PONCE fit for further service.

November was a recuperative month, spent at Norfolk. PONCE concentrated on completing jobs started during the Little Creek IMAV. The next underway period did not arrive until December. On 5 December, PONCE steamed down to Onslow Bay for a week and a half to provide training support for USMC units. However, operations were severely constrained by the existing weather conditions which produced 15+ degree rolls at times.

PONCE returned to Little Creek Amphib Base for it's annual holiday leave and upkeep period to close out the year.

PONCE'S OPERATION SCHEDULE FOR 1989

Jan 01 to Jan 18 - Holiday Stand down period
Jan 19 to May 19 - PMA period at Metro Machine shipyard
May 19 to May 21 - Armed Forces Day weekend at Waterside
May 22 to May 26 - Ammo onload and Whiskey Anchorage and
training in Vacapes
May 27 to Jun 18 - Inport Norfolk
Jun 19 to Jun 23 - Underway Onslow
Jun 24 to Jun 25 - Visit ship inport Norfolk
Jun 26 to Jun 30 - Embark Midshipman, underway for Mobile
Training Team
Jul 01 to Jul 04 - Holiday routine
Jul 05 to Jul 16 - LEO Gulf of Mexico
Jul 17 to Jul 18 - Key West port visit, Midshipmen debark
Jul 19 to Jul 23 - LEO Gulf of Mexico
Jul 24 to Jul 26 - Port visit Miami, Fla.
Jul 27 to Jul 29 - Enroute to Norfolk
Jul 30 to Aug 07 - Inport Norfolk, Command Inspection
Aug 08 to Aug 11 - Underway Onslow Bay
Aug 12 to Aug 14 - Inport Norfolk
Aug 15 to Aug 25 - SEAL operations
Aug 26 to Sep 04 - Inport Norfolk
Sep 05 to Sep 08 - Underway Amphib Ops
Sep 09 to Oct 02 - Inport Little Creek
Oct 03 to Oct 22 - Inport Norfolk, Prep for INSURV
Oct 23 to Oct 27 - INSURV
Oct 28 to Dec 03 - Inport Norfolk
Dec 04 to Dec 14 - Underway Onslow Bay
Dec 15 to Dec 31 - Inport Little Creek