



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41)  
FPO AE 09591-1729

Rec'd 3/21/00  
W/O dish

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
5750  
Ser LSD41/011  
5 Mar 00

From: Commanding Officer, USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41)  
To: Director, Naval History (NO9BH), Naval Historical Center,  
Washington Navy Yard, 901 M Street SE, Bldg. 57,  
Washington, DC 20374-5060

Subj: 1999 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Chronology  
(3) Narrative  
(4) Supporting Documents

1. In accordance with requirements set forth in reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted for the period 01 January 1999 to 31 December 1999.

  
B. E. BARRINGTON

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COMPHIBGRU TWO

**JANUARY 1999**

28 DEC – 08 JAN     STANDDOWN LEAVE/UPKEEP PERIOD

12 JAN – 21 JAN     FLEET MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY

15 JAN             COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATIONS ASSESMENT  
                    HULL CLEANING  
                    SK1(SW/AW) BRIAN MASON'S REENLISTMENT  
                    QM2(SW) JEFFREY WACTOR'S REENLISTMENT  
                    HT1(SW) TREZELLINE HOUSE'S REENLISTMENT

19 JAN –22 JAN     LOGISTICS MAINTENANCE ASSIST

20 JAN             FAST CRUISE – CBR DRILL

21 JAN             E-7 EXAM

22 JAN             RM2 MICHAEL SHEFFIELD'S REENLISTMENT

25 JAN – 02 FEB     TAILORED SHIPS TRAINING AVAILABILITY

25 JAN             FAST CRUISE – GENERAL QUARTERS

26 JAN             FAST CRUISE – CBR DRILL

27 JAN – 28 JAN     UNDERWAY – VIRGINIA CAPES OPERATING AREA

28 JAN             NON-COMBATANT EVACUATION EXERCISE  
                    FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                    MOOR PIER 15S, NAB LITTLE CREEK, VA

**FEBRUARY 1999**

01 FEB EMBARK TYPE COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS TRAINING PLATOON

03 FEB – 12 FEB UNDERWAY VIRGINIA CAPES AND CHERRY POINT OPERATING AREA  
COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS SQUADRON SIX  
TYPE COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS TRAINING  
EMBARK LCAC 88

04 FEB ANCHOR, ONSLOW BAY, NC  
LCAC AND AAV OPERATIONS – NEO EXERCISE

05 FEB UNDERWAY FOR LCAC AND AAV OPERATIONS  
ANCHOR, ONSLOW BAY, NC

06 FEB UNDERWAY FOR LCAC AND AAV OPERATIONS  
ANCHOR, ONSLOW BAY, NC

08 FEB – 09 FEB UNDERWAY FOR LCAC AND AAV OPERATIONS  
ANCHOR, ONSLOW BAY, NC  
OFFLOAD USMC PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT

10 FEB CBR DRILL  
LCU OPERATIONS  
FLIGHT QUARTERS  
UNDERWAY ENROUTE NAB LITTLE CREEK, VA

11 FEB DIVTACS WITH USS BATAAN  
CIWS PACFIRE

12 FEB LCAC OPERATIONS  
MOOR PIER 15N, NAB LITTLE CREEK VA

15 FEB – 28 FEB IT-21 UPGRADES

15 FEB – 19 FEB SHIPHANDLING COMPLEX

19 FEB BM2(SW) DAVID QUANTE'S REENLISTMENT

25 FEB MSCS(SW) JOSEPH MAY'S RETIREMENT CERMONY

26 FEB LCDR THOMAS J. LAFFERTY RELIEVED LCDR WILLIAM G. SYMPSON AS EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
RMCM(SW) ALEXIS HINE'S REENLISTMENT

Enclosure (3)

**MARCH 1999**

01 MAR – 15 MAR IT-21 UPGRADES

01 MAR – 15 MAR COMBAT SYSTEMS READINESS REVIEW – PHASE I  
TARGET

02 MAR E-4 EXAM

04 MAR E-5 EXAM

08 MAR HT2 CHRISTINE MARTINEZ’S REENLISTMENT

09 MAR E-6 EXAM

10 MAR HT1 FRANKLIN MRAZIK’S RETIREMENT CEREMONY

11 MAR – 12 MAR AMPHIBIOUS READINESS GROUP COMMANDER’S  
CONFERENCE

12 MAR EN3 CHADWICK HENDERSON’S REENLISTMENT  
MS3 DENNIS QUINN’S REENLISTMENT

17 MAR UNDERWAY ENROUTE ANNAPOLIS, MD  
EMBARK LCAC 34  
ANCHOR

18 MAR RECEPTION FOR USNA ONBOARD WHIDBEY ISLAND

18 MAR – 21 MAR TOURS FOR MIDSHIPMEN AND PUBLIC

19 MAR RECEPTION AT USNA SAILING CENTER  
LCAC OPERATIONS

22 MAR UNDERWAY FOR NAB LITTLE CREEK, VA  
DEBARK LCAC 34  
MOOR PIER 15S

23 MAR - 26 MAR SHIPBOARD EXPLOSIVE SAFETY INSPECTION

26 MAR BM2 DUANE FROSBURG’S REENLISTMENT

29 MAR START COMBAT SYSTEMS READINESS REVIEW –  
PHASE II

25 JUN	FLIGHT QUARTERS LCAC OPERATIONS SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS AAV OPERATIONS OFF LOAD AAVS
26 JUN	FLIGHT QUARTERS LCAC OPERATIONS ANCHOR, ONSLOW BAY, NC
27 JUN	UNDERWAY LCAC OPERATIONS FLIGHT QUARTERS NON-COMBATANT EVACUATION EXERCISE
28 JUN	LCAC OPERATIONS FLIGHT QUARTERS
29 JUN	LCAC OPERATIONS FLIGHT QUARTERS
30 JUN	22 <sup>ND</sup> MEU OFFLOAD LCAC OPERATIONS FLIGHT QUARTERS EN ROUTE LITTLE CREEK, VA

**APRIL 1999**

29 MAR – 02 APR COMBAT SYSTEMS READINESS REVIEW – PHASE II

01 APR – 16 APR IT-21 UPGRADES

01 APR REFUEL

02 APR HELO FIREFIGHTING TEAM TRAINER

05 APR – 09 APR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SURVEY

05 APR 20 TON CRANE WEIGHT TEST  
DC WET TRAINER

07 APR 22 MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT TROOP BERTHING  
INSPECTION

08 APR EMBARKATION CONFERENCE – ELECTRONIC WARFARE  
TRAINING GROUP ATLANTIC

12 APR DUTY SECTION 3 DC WET TRAINER  
AMPHIBIOUS READINESS GROUP COMMANDER’S  
CONFERENCE

12 APR – 14 APR RADAR NAVIGATION TEAM TRAINER  
SHIPHANDLING COMPLEX TRAINER

19 APR NAVAL WARFARE PUBLICATIONS LIBRARY INSPECTION  
FAST CRUISE

20 APR UNDERWAY ENROUTE MOREHEAD CITY, NC  
SWEPT CHANNEL EXERCISE  
EMBARK LCACS  
DIESEL TREND ANALYSIS

21 APR – 27 APR PHIBRON/MEU INTEGRATED TRAINING, ONSLOW  
BAY, NC

21 APR MOOR MOREHEAD CITY, NC  
AMPHIBIOUS ONLOAD  
UNDERWAY ENROUTE ONSLOW BAY, NC  
CONDITION “A” FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

Enclosure (3)

- 22 APR           FLASHING LIGHT DRILL  
 CONDITION "A" FOR AAVS , LCACS AND  
 SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS  
 LAUNCH LCACS  
 ANCHOR ONSLOW BAY, NC  
 RECOVER AND LAUNCH AAVS  
 FLIGHT OPERATIONS  
 RECOVER LCACS  
 UNDERWAY TO CHERRY POINT OPERATING AREA
- 23 APR           CONDITION "A" FOR LCACS, AAVS AND  
 SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS  
 LAUNCH LCACS  
 ANCHOR ONSLOW BAY, NC  
 LAUNCH AAVS  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 RECOVER AAVS AND LCACS  
 UNDERWAY TO CHERRY POINT OPERATING AREA
- 24 APR           LCAC PERSONNEL TRANSPORT MODULE INSTALL  
 MASS CASUALTY DRILL  
 FLIGHT QUARTER
- 25 APR           DRIVER TRAINING  
 EMISSIONS CONTROL EXERCISE  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL DRIFTING  
 MINE EXERCISE  
 BASIC ENGINEERING CASUALTY CONTROL EXERCISES
- 26 APR           CONDITION "A" FOR LCACS, AAVS AND  
 SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS  
 LAUNCH LCACS  
 ANCHOR ONSLOW BAY, NC  
 LAUNCH AAVS  
 AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT REHEARSAL  
 SMALL BOAT ATTACK EXERCISE  
 LCU OPERATIONS  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 RECOVER AAVS AND LCACS  
 UNDERWAY TO CHERRY POINT OPERATING AREA
- 27 APR           CONDITION "A" FOR LCACS, AAVS AND  
 SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS  
 ANCHOR ONSLOW BAY, NC  
 AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT AND OFFLOAD

27 APR            FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                    UNDERWAY TO CHERRY POINT OPERATING AREA  
                    DETACH FROM COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS SQUADRON  
                    SIX FOR CAPSTONE EXERCISE

28 APR            CAPSTONE EXERCISE  
                    CONDITION "A" FOR LCACS  
                    RECOVER LCACS  
                    UNDERWAY ENROUTE NAB LITTLE CREEK, VA

29 APR            LCAC OPERATIONS  
                    DEBARK LCACS  
                    MOOR PIER 15N NAB, LITTLE CREEK, VA

30 APR            ENLISTMENT EXTENTION CEREMONY FOR  
                    EN1(SW) CHAD ALBERT

**MAY 1999**

3 MAY                    NAVAL WARFARE PUBLICATION LIBRARY INSPECTION

3 MAY – 6 MAY        LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

10 MAY                UNDERWAY, CHERRY POINT OPAREA  
CLOSE-IN WEAPONS SYSTEM  
PRE-ALIGNMENT CALIBRATION FIRE  
TOWED DRONE UNIT EXERCISE

11 MAY                ANCHOR ONSLOW BAY, NC

12 MAY                SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS  
AAV OPERATIONS  
UNDERWAY  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

13 MAY                SWING SHIP  
SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS  
AAV OPERATIONS  
FLIGHT QUARTERS  
BASIC ENGINEERING CASUALTY CONTROL EXERCISES

14 MAY                MOORED - NAB LITTLE CREEK, VA

17 MAY – 21 MAY    HURRICANE EXERCISE 1999  
HULL CLEANING

19 MAY – 04 JUN    FLEET MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY

25 MAY                DOD ACQUISITION TOUR

25 MAY – 27 MAY    MEUEX EMBARK CONFERENCE

**JUNE 1999**

01 JUN – 04 JUN FLEET MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY

04 JUN EN2 ROY NEAL'S RE-ENLISTMENT  
EN1(SW) DAVID MEEHAN'S RE-ENLISTMENT  
PC1(SW) JEFFREY JOHNSON'S RETIREMENT CEREMONY

07 JUN UNDERWAY

08 JUN WET WELL OPERATIONS  
MOOR NAB LITTLE CREEK, PIER 15N

09 JUN MS1(SW) MATTHEW JOYNER'S RE-ENLISTMENT

15 JUN COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS SQUADRON SIX VISIT

16 JUN FROCKING CEREMONY

17 JUN 22 MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT SACEX CONFERENCE  
SH1 MONA BINION'S RE-ENLISTMENT

18 JUN OPERATIONAL TESTS #1 & #2 SHIPS SERVICE DIESEL  
GENERATORS

21 JUN PRE-SAIL/SEAL BRIEF (USS BATAAN)  
EMBARK ADVANCE 22<sup>ND</sup> MEU PARTY

22 JUN – 01 JUL UNDERWAY, MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT EXERCISE

22 JUN CONDITION A FOR LCAC OPS  
EMBARK LCAC 49 & LCAC 88  
CONDITION 1A

23 JUN LAUNCH LCACS  
MOOR MOREHEAD CITY, NC  
UNDERWAY  
RECOVER LCACS  
RECOVER AAVS  
ON STATION ONSLOW BAY, NC

24 JUN BASIC ENGINEERING CASUALTY CONTROL EXERCISES  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

**JULY 1999**

01 JUL UNREP WITH USNS BIG HORN  
DKC JOSEPH RUYBE'S REENLISTMENT  
MOORED - LITTLE CREEK, VA

02 JUL 3M STAND DOWN

03 JUL COOKOUT - FLIGHT DECK

04 JUL COOKOUT - FLIGHT DECK

05 JUL AMMUNITION ONLOAD  
BERTH SHIFT - PIER 15

06 JUL SAILOR/JUNIOR SAILOR OF THE QUARTER BOARD

15 JUL UNDERWAY EN ROUTE ONSLOW BAY, NC  
CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS

7 JUL CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
CONDITION "A" FOR SMALL BOATS  
CONDITION "A" FOR WET WELL OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH AAVS  
ARTY RAID - ONSLOW BEACH  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

18 JUL BACK LOAD ARTY RAID  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

19 JUL UNREP WITH USS CARNEY  
MASS CASUALTY EXERCISE  
FLIGHT QUARTERS  
CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS

20 JUL FLIGHT QUARTERS

21 JUL CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH LCACS  
CONDITION "A" FOR SMALL BOATS  
LAUNCH AAVS  
LAUNCH PL2

22 JUL FLIGHT QUARTERS

23 JUL FLIGHT QUARTERS

24 JUL CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH LCAC  
MOORED – LITTLE CREEK, VA

27 JUL COUPLE'S PRE-DEPLOYMENT BRIEF

28 JUL SHIP'S PICNIC

29 JUL SINGLE SAILOR'S PRE-DEPLOYMENT BRIEF

30 JUL HT1 GARY NIXON'S REENLISTMENT

**AUGUST 1999**

02 AUG 22 MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S VISIT

05 AUG PRE-SAIL CONFERENCE AT BATAAN

06 AUG ADMINISTRATIVE GENERAL QUARTERS

09 AUG UNDERWAY EN ROUTE MOREHEAD CITY, NC

10 AUG CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH LCAC  
MOORED - MOREHEAD CITY, NC  
AMPHIBIOUS EQUIPMENT ONLOAD  
UNDERWAY EN ROUTE ONLSOW BAY, NC

11 AUG 25 MM/.50 CAL FAMILIARIZATION FIRE  
MASS CASUALTY EXERCISE  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

12 AUG DETECT-TO-ENGAGE EXERCISE  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

13 AUG RENDEZVOUS WITH USS SIROCCO  
ASTERN REFUELING

14 AUG CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH LCAC

16 AUG CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH LCACS  
LAUNCH SMALL BOATS  
LOAD AAVS  
FLIGHT QUARTERS  
RADM "WOODY" SUTTON & BGEN ROBERT FLANAGAN VISIT

17 AUG CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH LCACS

18 AUG CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH LCACS

19 AUG UNREP WITH USNS KANAWHA  
MOORED - LITTLE CREEK, VA

Enclosure (3)

MOORED – LITTLE CREEK, VA

20 AUG

UNDERWAY  
CONDITION “A” FOR LCAC RECOVERY  
FLIGHT QUARTERS  
MOORED – LITTLE CREEK, VA

27 AUG

ENCS NORMAN STODDARD’S REENLISTMENT

Enclosure (3)

**SEPTEMBER 1999**

01 SEP COMMENCE POM LEAVE PERIOD TWO

02 SEP CHILD (6-12 YRS) PRE-DEPLOYMENT BRIEFING  
PACE INSTRUCTOR VISIT

08 SEP SWO DETAILER VISIT – EWTGLANT RM 1777  
CPG-2 SAFETY MEETING  
SURFACE OFFICE PLACEMENT & DETAILER VISIT

09 SEP CPG-2 OPS MEETING  
CMS TRAINING (OPS DEPT/ESWS CANIDATES)

10 SEP CNSC VISIT

14 SEP SESEF ANTENNA RADIATION TESTING  
NAVIGATION/LCAC BRIEF

15 SEP PRE-SAIL CONFERENCE (BATAAN) – (CO, OPS, 1<sup>ST</sup> LT)  
UNDERWAY

16 SEP E-6 EXAM  
CPO FROCKING CEREMONY

17 SEP RENDEZVOUS WITH USNS PATUXENT

18 SEP ANCHOR – ONSLOW BAY

19 SEP COMMENCE 22 MEU ONLOAD, SHR PCS  
FLIGHT QUARTERS  
PRE-SAIL/DEPLOYMENT BRIEF (BATAAN)

20 SEP CONDITION “A” FOR LCAC LAUNCH  
LAUNCH LCAC  
CONTINUE 22 MEU ONLOAD

21 SEP UNREP WITH USNS BIG HORN  
PACFIRE/CHAFF BRIEFS

22 SEP CIWS PACFIRE  
CHAFF LAUNCH  
HELO CRASH/SALVAGE  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

Enclosure (3)

23 SEP ASW EX/NIXIE STREAM, WBI OCE  
ACTIVATE Y2K COMMS COOP  
LCAC MAINTENANCE TURNS  
SMALL ARMS BRIEF  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

24 SEP FLIGHT QUARTERS  
ROE/LAW AT SEA TRAINING  
CPR-6/22 MEU VISIT

25 SEP EXERCISE SESSION 2  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

26 SEP STEEL BEACH PICNIC

27 SEP ARG PHOTO EXERCISE  
SMALL ARMS FIRE  
ES RAPID SIGNAL EVAL  
FAMILIARIZATION FIRE (USMC .50 CAL)  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

28 SEP SAFETY STANDDOWN  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

29 SEP FLIGHT QUARTERS

30 SEP UNREP WITH USNS LEROY GRUMMAN  
FLIGHT QUARTERS  
LCAC MAINTENANCE TURNS

**OCTOBER 1999**

01 OCT ANCHORED – ROTA, SPAIN  
 BM2 KARL KUNDRAT’S RE-ENLISTMENT  
 1A FOR SMALL BOATS

02 OCT DEPART ROTA, SPAIN EN ROUTE ALICANTE, SPAIN  
 DCCS KEITH TUCKER’S RE-ENLISTMENT  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS

03 OCT – 09 OCT MOORED – ALICANTE, SPAIN

08 OCT NAVY LEAGUE LEVANTE COUNCIL VISIT

09 OCT DEPARTED ALICANTE, SPAIN EN ROUTE EXERCISE  
 BRIGHT STAR

10 OCT RENDEZVOUS WITH BATAAN & SHREVEPORT  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS

12 OCT UNREP W/ITH USNS LEROY GRUMMAN  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 VERTREP WITH USNS CONCORD  
 CAPTAIN’S MAST

13 OCT U. S. NAVY’S 224<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 BRIGHT STAR BRIEF – BATAAN  
 NAVY BIRTHDAY CAKE CUTTING CEREMONY

14 OCT FAMILIARIZATION FIRE (M 14, 12 GAUGE, 9 MM)  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS

15 OCT LCAC OPERATIONS  
 AIR OPERATIONS BRIEF – HMS FEARLESS

16 OCT - 3 NOV EXERCISE BRIGHT STAR 99

16 OCT CONDITION “A” FOR LCAC OPS  
 LAUNCH LCAC/AAV  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS

17 OCT LCAC OPERATIONS  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 COMMODORE’S CALL

Enclosure (3)

18 OCT            AAV/LCAC TOUCH DOWN  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

19 OCT            FLIGHT QUARTERS  
CONDITION "A" FOR WET WELL OPERATIONS  
CONDITION "A" FOR SMALL BOATS  
SCU COMPATIBILITY TRIALS TOUR FOR UK/NL/EG  
AMPHIBIOUS DEMONSTRATION BRIEF (FEARLESS)  
EGYPTIAN LIASON NAVAL OFFICER ARRIVES

20 OCT            AAV/LCAC LAUNCH  
NL LCU AFFILIATION TRAINING

21 OCT            CONDITION "A" FOR SMALL BOATS  
CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC 49/88  
AAV/LCAC LAUNCH  
AMPHIBIOUS DEMONSTRATION REHEARSAL  
AMPHIBIOUS DEMONSTRATION BRIEF

22 OCT            CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPS  
FLIGHT QUARTERS  
CONDITION "A" FOR SMALL BOAT OPS  
AAV/LCAC LAUNCH  
AMPHIBIOUS DEMONSTRATION

23 OCT            FLIGHT QUARTERS  
CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPS  
ADM JAMES KILGOUR VISIT  
UNDERWAY EN ROUTE RAS RENDEZVOUS  
RAS WITH USS SEATTLE  
DETACH EN ROUTE ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT

24 OCT            PILOT PICK-UP (ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT)  
EOD DIVE (HULL INSPECTION)  
UNDERWAY EN ROUTE AMPHIBIOUS OPERATING AREA

25 OCT            CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
CONDITION "A" FOR SMALL BOATS (FEARLESS)  
LAUNCH THE GIG  
SMALL BOATS TO HMS FEARLESS

26 OCT            CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
LAUNCH LCAC 19 FOR BACKLOAD  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

Enclosure (3)

27 OCT            FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                    FTX PLANNING CONFERENCE ON FEARLESS (OPS, 1<sup>ST</sup> LT)  
                    CAPTAIN'S MAST  
                    ADMINISTRATIVE GENERAL QUARTERS

28 OCT            CAPTAIN'S MAST  
                    FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                    ROYAL BAND ARRIVAL  
                    ROYAL BAND CONCERT

29 OCT            FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                    ROYAL MARINE BAND TO HMS OCEAN  
                    CAPTAIN'S MAST  
                    FLIGHT QUARTERS

30 OCT            STEEL BEACH PICNIC  
                    LCAC OPERATIONS

31 OCT            FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                    CONDITIONS "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS (BAT)  
                    TOUCH DOWN

**NOVEMBER 1999**

01 NOV           CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 SK1 DOUGLAS KILBARGER'S REENLISTMENT

02 NOV           CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC/SMALL BOAT OPS  
 UNDERWAY EN ROUTE ANTALYA, TURKEY

03 NOV           DIVTACS  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS

04 NOV           ESWS BOARD  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 UNREP WITH USNS JOHN LENTHAL

05 NOV – 10 NOV   ANCHORED - ANTALYA, TURKEY

08 NOV           AWARDS CEREMONY – FLIGHT DECK  
 BRITISH OFFICER RECEPTION

09 NOV           ENS BRANDON MAHONE INVOLVED IN FATAL  
 ACCIDENT

10 NOV           DCTT BRIEF  
 UNDERWAY EN ROUTE HAIFA, ISRAEL  
 RENDEZVOUS WITH USS SHREVEPORT

11 NOV           UNREP WITH USNS CONCORD & USNS JOHN LENTHAL  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 CMC'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD

12 NOV           FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 ESWS BOARD  
 MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR ENS BRANDON MAHONE

13 NOV – 28 NOV   MOORED - HAIFA, ISRAEL

13 NOV           CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPS  
 LAUNCH HOPPERS 19/51  
 OFFLOAD MARINE EQUIPMENT

14 NOV           CHANGE OF COMMAND REHEARSAL  
 CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS

Enclosure (3)

16 NOV CHANGE OF COMMAND REHEARSAL

17 NOV CHANGE OF COMMAND

18 NOV ENGINEERING EVOLUTIONS

19 NOV BASIC ENGINEERING CASUALTY CONTROL EXERCISES

22 NOV GM2 JEFFREY FLADER'S RE-ENLISTMENT  
USO CONCERT (JOAN JETT & THE BLACKHEARTS)

23 NOV VADM DANIEL J. MURPHY VISIT

26 NOV BACKLOAD

27 NOV UNDER SECNAV VISIT

28 NOV UNDERWAY EN ROUTE PALERMO, SICILY  
CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS

29 NOV FLIGHT QUARTERS  
UNREP WITH USNS PATUXENT  
WEAPONS POSTURE DRILL WINDOW  
CAPTAIN'S MAST

30 NOV CIWS PACFIRE  
FLIGHT QUARTERS

**DECEMBER 1999**

01 DEC BECCES  
 REENLISTMENT FOR YN1(SW) RODNEY WOODS, HM1(SW)  
 LONNIE PETERSON, OS2 JULIUS WELLS  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 MASS CASUALTY/HELO CRASH DRILL  
 DEPART NORTH IONIAN SEA EN ROUTE PALERMO

02 DEC LEAR SERVICES  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 TRANSIT STRAITS OF MESSINA

03 DEC – 09 DEC MOORED – PALERMO, SICILY

04 DEC AWARDS CEREMONY – FLIGHT DECK  
 CAPTAIN'S CALL

09 DEC UNDERWAY EN ROUTE ADRIATIC SEA  
 TRANSIT STRAITS OF MESSINA

10 DEC UNREP W/ USNS JOHN LENTHAL  
 TDU SHOOT

11 DEC FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 VERTREP W/ USNS CONCORD  
 25 MM/50 CAL/M60 SHOOT

12 DEC FLIGHT QUARTERS

13 DEC – 17 DEC ADRIATIC OPERATIONS

13 DEC INTEL BRIEF/BATTLE ORDER TRAINING FOR  
 TAO, OOD, AND CICWO  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS

14 DEC BECCES  
 SURFEX 425  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS

15 DEC CONDITION "A" FOR LCAC OPERATIONS  
 JUNIOR OFFICER SHIPHANDLING  
 LOSS OF STEERING DRILL  
 FLIGHT QUARTERS  
 GSE3 JOHN SUTTON'S REENLISTMENT

Enclosure (3)

16 DEC            DIVTACS  
                  LOW SLOW FLIER EXERCISE WITH P-3C  
                  FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                  LT GEN PETER PACE AND BGEN JAMES F. AMOS VISIT  
                  EMCON DRILLS

17 DEC            PHOTOEX  
                  9MM QUAL CLASSES  
                  FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                  INFINITE MOONLIGHT PLANNING CONFERENCE

18 DEC            FLIGHT QUARTERS  
                  RAS WITH USNS JOHN LENTHAL  
                  SMALL ARMS FAMILIARIZATION FIRE  
                  DETACH EN ROUTE GENOA, ITALY  
                  TRANSIT STRAIT OF MESSINA

19 DEC            USMC SMALL ARMS TRAINING

20 DEC            9MM FAMILIARIZATION FIRE

21 DEC – 03 JAN   MOORED – GENOA, ITALY

## **JANUARY 1999**

USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41) began the new year in the middle of the second holiday leave and upkeep period. January 8<sup>th</sup>, the entire crew returned and continued preparations for the Inter-Deployment Training Cycle's Final Evaluation Period.

Through January 21<sup>st</sup>, the ship continued the Fleet Maintenance Availability (FMAV) where various pieces of equipment were repaired or replaced. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, the ship underwent an underwater hull cleansing and inspection.

HT1(SW) Brian House, SK1(SW/AW) Jeffrey Mason, and QM2(SW) Trezeline Wactor reenlisted on January 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Logistic Maintenance Assist Visit and 3M review began on January 19<sup>th</sup>. The assist consisted of reviewing the Supply Department's files and logistics programs. The other part of the assist involved reviewing each work center and all maintenance personnel for preventative maintenance procedures and documentation.

Tailored Ship Training Availability (TSTA) III began January 25<sup>th</sup> inport. During TSTA III, the ship conducted several fast cruise evolutions including multi-hit mass conflagration drills and Chemical, Biological and Radiation (CBR) drills.

WHIDBEY ISLAND was underway on January 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> in the Virginia Capes Operating Area (VACAPES) in support of TSTA III. Before mooring January 28<sup>th</sup>, the ship conducted a Non-Combatant Evacuation (NEO) exercise which included helicopter and wet-well operations.

## **FEBRUARY 1999**

On February 1<sup>st</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND embarked Marines and equipment in support of Type Commander Amphibious Training (TCAT). Two days later, WHIDBEY ISLAND was underway in the VACAPES to complete the Final Evaluation Period en route Onslow Bay, North Carolina.

The Final Evaluation Period portion took place February 3<sup>rd</sup> through February 5<sup>th</sup> and consisted of a Condition One Alpha drill and a NEO exercise.

TCAT consisted of several Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) operations and Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV) launches while at anchor and underway. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, the ship played a role in the amphibious assault rehearsal. The BATAAN Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG) conducted the amphibious assault again February 6<sup>th</sup> utilizing lessons learned from the previous day.

On February 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND offloaded Marine personnel and equipment before heading home to Naval Amphibious Base (NAB) Little Creek, Virginia.

En route to Virginia, the ship conducted Divisional Tactics with USS BATAAN (LHD 5) and Close-In Weapons System (CIWS) Pre-Alignment Calibration (PAC) fire before mooring at Pier 15S, NAB Little Creek, February 12<sup>th</sup>.

IT-21 Upgrades began February 15<sup>th</sup>. These upgrades added communications equipment such as Sailor Phones and ship-wide local area network (LAN) system. Sailor Phones were installed enabling crewmembers to call stateside family members from the ship while underway.

Junior officers spent February 15<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> at the Marine Shiphandling Institute Complex improving their ship-handling skills.

Several crewmembers made major career decisions during February. BM2(SW) David Quante reenlisted for four years on February 19<sup>th</sup>. MSCS(SW) Joseph May retired February 25<sup>th</sup> after 20 years of service. February 26<sup>th</sup>, LCDR Thomas J. Lafferty relieved LCDR William G. Sympton as WHIDBEY ISLAND's Executive Officer. The same day Command Master Chief, RMCM(SW) Alexis Hines reenlisted for three years and departed for HC-8 in Norfolk, Virginia.

## MARCH 1999

March started off with WHIDBEY ISLAND continuing IT-21 Upgrades and Phase I of the Combat Systems Readiness Review, which evaluated and trained personnel in the Operations Department.

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>, the semi-annual exam was administered for eligible E-4s, E-5s, and E-6s, respectively.

HT2 Christine Martinez reenlisted on March 8<sup>th</sup>. On March 10<sup>th</sup>, HT1 Franklin Mrazik retired after 20 years of service, and EN3 Chadwick Henderson and MS3 Dennis Quinn celebrated their reenlistments March 12<sup>th</sup>.

WHIDBEY ISLAND was underway for Annapolis, Maryland, March 17<sup>th</sup>. En route to anchorage, the ship embarked Hopper 34, a LCAC from NAB Little Creek. After a ten-hour sea and anchor detail, the ship anchored outside Annapolis. The following four days, the ship hosted tours for more than 400 Midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy and 300 of the general public.

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the ship transited back to NAB Little Creek, for the Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection. BM2 Duane Frosburg reenlisted a few days later on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

The second phase of the Combat Systems Readiness Review began March 29<sup>th</sup>, closing out the month.

## APRIL 1999

WHIDBEY ISLAND began April inport at NAB Little Creek, Pier 15S, continuing Phase II of the Combat Systems Readiness Review and IT-21 upgrades.

April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the ship's s flight deck fire party attended the Helicopter Firefighting Team Trainer at Fleet Training Group Norfolk for refresher training.

The following week, WHIDBEY ISLAND's Medical Department hosted an Environmental Health Survey. The same week, Operations and Deck Departments participated in several Amphibious Squadron and Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration (PMINT) Conferences.

On April 12<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND's Commanding Officer, CDR Ray L. Clark, Jr., attended the ARG Commander's Conference in support of the upcoming PMINT.

From April 12<sup>th</sup> to April 14<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND's Junior Officers attended the Shiphandling Complex Trainer while the Operations Specialists attended Radar Navigation Training.

The ship conducted a fast cruise in preparation for PMINT and hosted a Naval Warfare Publications Library Inspection. on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

WHIDBEY ISLAND was underway for Morehead City, North Carolina on April 20<sup>th</sup> to onload Marine personnel and equipment. Shortly after entering Thimble Shoal Channel, the ship embarked LCACs 88 and 34.

The following day marked the beginning of the seven-day PMINT which involved the flag ship, BATAAN, and USS SHREVEPORT (LPD 12). Everyday the ship conducted LCAC, AAV, and flight operations in Onslow Bay, North Carolina. The ship would transit close to the beach, launch LCACs and AAVs, and anchor at a pre-designated point. By the end of each day, WHIDBEY ISLAND recovered the LCACs and AAVs before departing for the Cherry Point Operating Area.

During PMINT the ship participated in several Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) exercises, one of which included a simulated drifting mine. For the exercise, WHIDBEY ISLAND marked a suspect mine with a buoy and EOD destroyed the object with explosives. The ARG also participated in a simulated small boat attack.

April 27<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND offloaded all AAVs and Marine equipment and the ship detached from COMPHIBRON SIX for the Capstone Exercise.

The Capstone Exercise, which started April 28<sup>th</sup>, was an amphibious landing demonstration of LCACs for newly designated flag and general officers. Due to inclement weather, WHIDBEY ISLAND detached early and returned to NAB Little Creek, on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Later that day, the LCACs offloaded and WHIDBEY ISLAND moored at Pier 15N. The next day, EN1(SW) Chad Albert extended his enlistment for two years, ending a productive and busy month.

## MAY 1999

WHIDBEY ISLAND began May inport with a Naval Warfare Publications Library Inspection and a Logistics Management Assessment from May 3<sup>rd</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>.

May 10<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND was underway for Onslow Bay, North Carolina. During the transit, WHIDBEY ISLAND conducted a CISW PAC fire and successfully engaged a Towed Drone Unit with Mount 24.

The ship anchored in Onslow Bay, North Carolina, on May 11<sup>th</sup> and conducted small boat and AAV operations. Upon completion of amphibious operations, the ship was underway to conduct flight operations.

Shortly after midnight on May 13<sup>th</sup>, the ship performed a swing ship check to determine magnetic compass deviation. During the day, WHIDBEY ISLAND offloaded the AAVs and conducted more flight operations. By evening, the ship was en route to NAB Little Creek, mooring early May 14<sup>th</sup>.

From May 10<sup>th</sup> through May 21<sup>st</sup>, the ship participated in Commander Second Fleet's Hurricane Exercise 99. The ship also completed underwater hull cleaning from May 17<sup>th</sup> to May 21<sup>st</sup>.

WHIDBEY ISLAND commenced a three-week FMAV consisting of 180 different jobs on May 19<sup>th</sup>. Major work included an overhaul of the boat davit, #2 high pressure air compressor, both anchor windlasses and the ship's refer system. Also during the FMAV, the mess deck scullery machine and the port shaft seal were replaced.

May 25<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND hosted a Department of Defense Acquisition Tour. Closing out the month, several department heads attended the Marine Expeditionary Unit Exercise (MEUEX) Embark Conference from May 25<sup>th</sup> to May 27<sup>th</sup>.

## JUNE 1999

June started with WHIDBEY ISLAND inport and participating in a FMAV. On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the FMAV period was complete and the ship continued pre-deployment preparations.

June 7<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND was underway to the VACAPES with several Midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. After conducting training with the Midshipmen, WHIDBEY ISLAND moored at Pier 15N, NAB Little Creek, the following day.

June was an active month for many careers aboard WHIDBEY ISLAND. June 4<sup>th</sup>, EN2 Roy Neal and EN1(SW) David Meehan reenlisted while PC1(SW) Jeffrey Johnson retired. MS1(SW) Matthew Joyner reenlisted on June 9<sup>th</sup> and SH1 Mona Binion reenlisted on June 17<sup>th</sup>. Several Sailors were also advanced in a command frocking ceremony held June 16<sup>th</sup>.

WHIDBEY ISLAND received a visit June 15<sup>th</sup> from Commander Amphibious Squadron Six, CAPT Stephen C. Jasper. While aboard, CAPT Jasper addressed the ship's crew on the turntable to discuss the upcoming Mediterranean Deployment.

June 21<sup>st</sup>, the advance party of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) arrived onboard while the pre-sail conference was conducted aboard BATAAN.

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND was underway for the MEUEX. After receiving LCACs 49 and 88, WHIDBEY ISLAND transited to Morehead City, North Carolina, to embark elements of the 22 MEU.

Upon arrival at Onslow Bay, North Carolina, WHIDBEY ISLAND conducted LCAC and flight operations on a daily basis. June 25<sup>th</sup>, the ship launched AAVs on Onslow Beach in an amphibious exercise.

Over the next five days, WHIDBEY ISLAND conducted flight operations and launched LCACs in support of ashore objectives. On June 30<sup>th</sup>, the ship offloaded the majority of the Marine equipment and personnel, then proceeded to NAB Little Creek.

## JULY 1999

After an underway replenishment with USNS BIG HORN (TAO 198), WHIDBEY ISLAND returned to NAB Little Creek, on July 1<sup>st</sup>. A cookout and steel beach picnic was held on the flight deck July 4<sup>th</sup> for duty section personnel and their families.

July 7<sup>th</sup>, the special sea and anchor detail was stationed to berth shift WHIDBEY ISLAND in support of the ammunition onload at the Quay Wall.

Underway again July 15<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND headed to Onslow Bay to onload the 22 MEU the following day. Various training operations were conducted July 17<sup>th</sup>, such as LCAC and AAV operations, small boat operations, wet well operations, and flight quarters. During the training operations, Marines conducted a "raid" on Onslow Beach in preparation for exercises they could be conducting during the upcoming Mediterranean deployment.

More LCAC and AAV operations continued on July 19<sup>th</sup> as well as rig refueling with USS CARNEY (DDG 64). The BATAAN ARG moved 50 nautical miles out to sea July 20<sup>th</sup> to participate in the Joint Fleet Exercise with the JOHN F. KENNEDY Battle Group (JFKBATGRU). WHIDBEY ISLAND returned to NAB Little Creek, July 24<sup>th</sup>.

A pre-deployment briefing was held July 27<sup>th</sup> to answer questions and address concerns of spouses and dependents. The pre-deployment brief for single sailors was held two days later.

July 30<sup>th</sup> WHIDBEY ISLAND had a training stand down to cover shipboard training and personal qualification standard (PQS) requirements prior to deployment.

## AUGUST 1999

August began with WHIDBEY ISLAND in port at NAB Little Creek, continuing with IT-21 upgrades.

On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, the 22 MEU Executive Officer visited WHIDBEY ISLAND. During the same week, Supply and Engineering Departments attended logistics and maintenance briefs with JFKBATGRU while the Commanding Officer, Operations Officer, and First Lieutenant attended a pre-sail conference aboard BATAAN.

August 9<sup>th</sup> WHIDBEY ISLAND got underway en route Morehead City and Onslow Bay, North Carolina, to pick up Marine personnel and equipment in preparation for Special Operations Capable Exercise (SOCEX) '99.

The six-day SOCEX events began August 13<sup>th</sup>. The ship conducted LCAC, AAV, and flight operations in Onslow Bay. Additionally, the ship conducted a NEO exercise in which the ship simulated the rescue of more than 30 personnel.

August 16<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND hosted RADM "Woody" Sutton, Commander Amphibious Group TWO, and BGEN Robert M. Flanagan, Deputy Commander II MEF, for a tour of the ship.

Prior to returning homeport on August 19<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND conducted an early morning underway replenishment for fuel with the USNS KANAWHA (TAO 196).

The morning of August 20<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND was underway again to welcome more than 200 family members and friends aboard for a Dependent's Cruise. WHIDBEY ISLAND displayed several capabilities including MH-53 helicopter landings, weapons display, and LCAC demonstrations before returning to port in the evening.

To conclude a very busy month, WHIDBEY ISLAND began its leave and standdown period prior to its six-month deployment in September.

## **SEPTEMBER 1999**

As the month of September began in port NAB Little Creek, the crew was enjoying the second half of Preparation for Overseas Movement (POM) prior to WHIDBEY ISLAND's six-month Mediterranean Deployment.

September 2<sup>nd</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND held additional pre-deployment briefs informing the crew and their family members what to expect during the ship's deployment.

The crew returned aboard September 13<sup>th</sup>, only to realize the ship had been placed on standby to get underway early for Hurricane Floyd.

To avoid Hurricane Floyd, the ship was ordered underway on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Once underway, WHIDBEY ISLAND spent the next three days in the Atlantic avoiding the hurricane and then proceeded directly to Onslow Beach to embark 22 MEU for deployment, effectively starting deployment two days early.

Due to hurricane damage at Morehead City, WHIDBEY ISLAND unloaded all Marines and equipment "over-the-beach" in less than 8 hours.

Following the onload, WHIDBEY ISLAND commenced the transatlantic crossing with BATAAN and SHREVEPORT.

WHIDBEY ISLAND rendezvoused with USNS PATUXENT (TAO 201) on September 17<sup>th</sup> for underway replenishments and BIG HORN on September 21<sup>st</sup>.

At the end of September, WHIDBEY ISLAND was still in transit to Rota, Spain for turnover with the KEARSARGE ARG.

## OCTOBER 1999

Numerous training exercises, mostly related with Exercise Bright Star, kept WHIDBEY ISLAND Sailors and Marines busy for the first month of deployment.

October began with WHIDBEY ISLAND at anchor in Rota, Spain for turnover with the KEARSARGE ARG. CDR Ray L. Clark, Jr., Commanding Officer visited the BATAAN prior to the BATAAN ARG change of operational control to the Sixth Fleet.

WHIDBEY ISLAND weighed anchor the following morning en route its first Mediterranean liberty port, Alicante, Spain, on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. While in Alicante, the Commanding Officer made official calls on Luis Diaz Alperi, Mayor of Alicante, and Capitan de Navio Sancho Alvarez Ordonez, Alicante Port Captain. October 5<sup>th</sup> the wardroom was invited to a social with the Navy League Levante Council. On the 8<sup>th</sup>, the wardroom reciprocated by hosting 22 Levante Council members aboard for lunch, a tour of the ship, and demonstration of embarked Marine equipment. During the port call, WHIDBEY ISLAND triumphed in a soccer game against the Alicante Police, a basketball game against local Spanish Army team and participated in two tours: a sightseeing and shopping tour of Valencia and a medieval feast and war fighting festival. Castillo de Santa Barbara, located on a mountain overlooking Alicante, was a popular destination for Sailors and Marines. Also during the port call, WHIDBEY ISLAND sponsored a shipboard "Field Trip" for more than 30 disadvantaged children from Nazaret School.

WHIDBEY ISLAND departed Alicante October 9<sup>th</sup>. The ship rendezvoused on October 10<sup>th</sup> with BATAAN and SHREVEPORT en route Alexandria, Egypt and Exercise Bright Star. WHIDBEY ISLAND made history and lived up to her motto "First in Her Class, First Always" with the first simultaneous connected replenishment for stores and fuel for an LSD 41 class ship on October 12th.

WHIDBEY ISLAND celebrated the U. S. Navy's 224<sup>th</sup> birthday on October 13<sup>th</sup>. In honor of the occasion, the Food Service Division prepared a special birthday meal and cake for the crew. As tradition dictates, the youngest and oldest sailors, SN Robert Wiltz and SKC(SW) Oscar Gabor, cut the birthday cake. The same day the Executive Officer, First Lieutenant, Operations Officer, and Communications Officer attended a Bright Star brief aboard BATAAN. An Air Operations brief followed on October 15<sup>th</sup> aboard HMS FEARLESS (L 10).

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WHIDBEY ISLAND officially entered into Exercise Bright Star on October 16<sup>th</sup> and spent most of the remaining month in Victory Amphibious Operating Area (AOA) 40 miles west of Alexandria, Egypt. On October 18<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND's 15 AAVs and two LCACs touched down on the Egyptian coast for an offload of Marines and equipment.

On October 19<sup>th</sup> forty representatives from British, Egyptian, and Dutch militaries arrived for cross-training during which a British Landing Craft Utility (LCU) maneuvered into WHIDBEY ISLAND's well for compatibility trials. Also, the Egyptian Naval Liaison Officer, LT Wael Gemei arrived to assist in minimizing operational conflicts with Egyptian forces and for two weeks of cross-training. Daily launches and recoveries of LCACs and AAVs continued through October 21<sup>st</sup> in preparation for the Amphibious Assault Demonstration on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

October 23<sup>rd</sup>, ADM James Kilgour, Commander of the Bright Star Coalition, visited WHIDBEY ISLAND and extended a 'Bravo Zulu' to personnel involved in the demonstration for their hard work. The Amphibious Demonstration was coordinated with the United Kingdom/Netherlands Amphibious Group (UKNLPHIBGRU) Staff by the Executive Officer, LCDR T. J. Lafferty. LCDR Lafferty was introduced to the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), William S. Cohen, and Gen Anthony C. Zinni, Commander, Central Command (CENTCOM). The crew's morale was noticeably bolstered by the delivery of more than 2,800 pounds of mail after more than two weeks without word from home. Later that day, the ship weighed anchor to rendezvous with USS SEATTLE (AOE 3) for replenishment at sea before heading to Alexandria, Egypt.

On the 24<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND moored in Alexandria for Amphibious Affiliation Training with the Egyptian Navy. WHIDBEY ISLAND returned to sea and the Victory AOA the same day.

As training exercises continued, crewmembers received a well-deserved treat when Her Majesty's Royal Marine Band came aboard to entertain troops with a concert on the flight deck October 28<sup>th</sup>. After nearly two hours of Sinatra favorites, Beatles' tunes, and Souza marches, the CO thanked the band for their performance and welcomed them aboard for their one-night stay.

Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, the crew relaxed with a Steel Beach Picnic. On October 31<sup>st</sup>, CDR Clark gave the crew an additional day of holiday routine while Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) supplied popcorn and big-screen movies on the Turntable.

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Three reenlistments occurred during the month of October: DCCS(SW/AW) Keith Tucker, BM2(SW) Karl Kundrat and ET2 Shawn Bissell, who re-enlisted above the 39<sup>th</sup> Parallel and received his selective re-enlistment bonus (SRB) tax-free.

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## NOVEMBER 1999

November began with WHIDBEY ISLAND's continued participation in Exercise Bright Star. On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, CDR Ray L. Clark, Jr., Commanding Officer, welcomed aboard Combat Camera. The film crew spent a majority of the morning and early afternoon filming three separate projects: a "Go, Navy...Beat Army!" skit to be aired during the Army-Navy football game, interviews with members of the crew about their participation in Exercise Bright Star, and holiday greetings of individual Sailors and Marines to their family and friends back home. After the film crew completed taping, WHIDBEY ISLAND weighed anchor en route Antalya, Turkey

WHIDBEY ISLAND conducted an underway replenishment with USNS JOHN LENTHAL (TAO 189) November 4<sup>th</sup> and moored in Antalya, Turkey the following day. In Antalya, many crewmembers took advantage of a white water rafting tour and enjoyed the famous shopping Turkey had to offer. Crewmembers also participated in recreational activities such as soccer and basketball. Also moored in Antalya were the German ship, FGS EMDEN (F 210), and British ship, FEARLESS. Sailors from both ships toured WHIDBEY ISLAND, met their counterparts, and exchanged ball caps. Another visitor to WHIDBEY ISLAND was SIXTH Fleet Chaplain, CDR Jonathan Panitz. Rabbi Panitz traveled with WHIDBEY ISLAND to the next port, Haifa, Israel.

November 8<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND welcomed CDR Brian E. Barrington, Prospective Commanding Officer (PCO) and the wardroom hosted a reception for FEARLESS' officers. November 9<sup>th</sup>, the crew enjoyed its last day in Antalya after making preparations for departure the following morning.

Late in the evening of November 9<sup>th</sup>, ENS Brandon C. Mahone, Electronic Materiel Officer, fell from a cliff resulting in serious injuries and, ultimately, his death. ENS Mahone was trying to aid LCpl Justin Henthorne, who had fallen over an adjacent wall. After a short hospitalization for minor injuries, LCpl Henthorne returned to the ship. SN Shannon Huey and FN Eric Reddinger received Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medals for their quick action in rendering assistance to LCpl Henthorne and ENS Mahone.

On the evening of November 12<sup>th</sup>, Sailors and Marines gathered together to pay final respects to shipmate and friend, ENS Brandon C. Mahone. At the memorial service, ENS Mahone's roommate, ENS Michael Esparza delivered the eulogy and remembered his friend as dedicated

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husband, brother, and officer. CDR Clark, CDR Panitz, LT Robert Vance (Chaplain embarked with Marines), LTJG Matthew Andrews and ETSN Andrew Von Kanel also spoke during the memorial service.

WHIDBEY ISLAND departed Antalya, Turkey November 10<sup>th</sup> to rendezvous with SHREVEPORT for transit to Haifa. On Veteran's Day, stores and fuel were provided by USNS CONCORD (AFS 5) and JOHN LENTHAL.

Upon reaching Haifa, Israel November 13<sup>th</sup>, the crew offloaded Marine equipment and vehicles. Training exercises began for the Marines the next morning and continued through November 24<sup>th</sup>. Since all three ships from the BATAAN Amphibious ARG moored in the same port, Haifa presented a special opportunity for crewmembers to visit friends and even family members aboard BATAAN and SHREVEPORT.

The USO set-up tours to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the Dead Sea and Massada. Many Christian sites in Jerusalem were closed November 16<sup>th</sup> in protest to new Muslim construction in the area, so some travelers were disappointed. However, those traveling to Massada enjoyed the afternoon walking through the ancient site and effortless floating in the Dead Sea where bathers rolled in mud baths to protect their skin from the high mineral content. The USO also arranged for interested crewmembers to spend an evening and a meal with local families.

CDR Brian E. Barrington took command of WHIDBEY ISLAND from CDR Ray L. Clark, Jr. on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Guest speaker, Commander Task Force SIX ONE/Commander Amphibious Squadron SIX, Commodore Stephen C. Jasper praised CDR Clark for his leadership of WHIDBEY ISLAND and presented him the Meritorious Service Medal for outstanding performance as Commanding Officer.

In his farewell speech, CDR Clark thanked Sailors and Marines for their dedication and loyalty. Concluding the ceremony, CDR Barrington expressed his honor and excitement to assume command of the WHIDBEY ISLAND. Guests for the ceremony included Col Walter Gaskin, Commander Task Force SIX TWO/Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) 22, CAPT David Taylor and CAPT Lee Hackney, Commanding Officer and Executive Officer of BATAAN; CAPT Ned Herbert, Commanding Officer of SHREVEPORT; and CDR Peter Grausse, Commanding Officer of USS UNDERWOOD (FFG 36).

November 18<sup>th</sup>, CDR Barrington began his first full day as Commanding Officer conducting material checks, walking through spaces, and familiarizing the crew with his command philosophy and policies.

Many WHIDBEY ISLAND Sailors attended a Joan Jett and the Blackhearts USO-sponsored concert pierside BATAAN November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

VADM Daniel J. Murphy, Jr., COMSIXTHFLT, visited WHIDBEY ISLAND November 23<sup>rd</sup>. During his address to the crew, VADM Murphy urged service members to be proud of the job they were accomplishing in the Mediterranean and to write their congressmen and women more often about issues facing the Navy today.

The Marines returned from exercises November 24<sup>th</sup> in time to enjoy Thanksgiving. A picnic was held on the pier in the afternoon and a traditional turkey dinner was served that evening. Since November is Native American Heritage Month, CDR Barrington asked DKC Joseph Rubye, a Jicarilla Apache, to carve the turkey. Some Sailors and Marines skipped dinner aboard, and instead spent the holiday with the children of AHAVA Village for Children.

After a thorough washdown, Marine vehicles and equipment were backloaded Friday, November 26<sup>th</sup>. Simultaneously, the ship made preparations for the Under Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Jerry M. Hultin, to visit WHIDBEY ISLAND on November 27<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Hultin began his visit touring the ship and concluded his stay by addressing Sailors and Marines assembled on the flight deck. The Under Secretary emphasized that increasingly the Navy and Marine Corps would be the "first response" to global issues. He went on to discuss his policy of the "Three E's:" an ENGAGED Navy and Marine Corps around the world, an Internet system of E-COMMERCE useful for today's deployed fighting forces, and ways to 'END Inefficiency' by helping ships run smarter not harder. After his speech, Mr. Hultin invited questions from crewmembers concerning such issues as military housing, pending pay increases, personnel shortage problems, and the Internet's affect on the Navy's future.

WHIDBEY ISLAND departed Haifa on November 28<sup>th</sup> en route Palermo, Sicily. Several members of the crew received a special surprise November 29<sup>th</sup> as Joe Flanagan and Kevin Johnson, WVEC Norfolk Channel 13 Feature Reporter and Photojournalist, arrived to deliver early Christmas presents to select Sailors from their family members. Mr. Flanagan and his assistant filmed the Sailors opening their presents to be shown as part of an hour-long Christmas special airing December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> on WVEC-Channel 13 in Hampton Roads.

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On the final day of the month, WHIDBEY ISLAND crossed-over the 39<sup>th</sup> Parallel in the Northern Ionian Sea. Although considered a hazardous duty zone, most members of the crew looked forward to the crossing as it entitled them to tax-free pay for the month of November and free postage for personal mail.

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## DECEMBER 1999

Starting the month off on a positive note, YN1(SW) Rodney Woods, HM1(SW) Lonnie Peterson, and OS2 Julius Wells were reenlisted by the Executive Officer, LCDR T. J. Lafferty, December 1<sup>st</sup>. Because their reenlistments took place before WHIDBEY ISLAND transited south of the 39<sup>th</sup> Parallel in the North Ionian Sea, the sailors were entitled to tax-free reenlistment bonuses and leave sell-back. Numerous training exercises, such as General Quarters and helicopter crash/mass casualty drills, ran throughout the day to keep crewmembers' emergency skills sharp.

WHIDBEY ISLAND was the first ARG ship to transit the Strait of Messina on December 2<sup>nd</sup> en route Palermo, Sicily.

WHIDBEY ISLAND arrived in Palermo on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. After an awards ceremony on the flight deck, CDR Brian E. Barrington, Commanding Officer, addressed all personnel E-5 and below at Captain's Call to discuss the current deployment and future activities of the ship upon return to NAB Little Creek. CDR Barrington also answered questions from the crew concerning leave, upcoming schools, and future deployments.

Palermo was a pleasant liberty call for WHIDBEY ISLAND's Sailors and Marines. Besides the delicious Italian cuisine, the crew enjoyed local sites to include the cathedrals, palazzos, and the catacombs. Two of the more interesting cathedrals were the Palentine Chapel and the Church of San Giovanni.

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) provided transportation by bus to Naval Air Station Sigonella. Even though the bus ride to the base was a three-hour drive each way, many members of the crew took the trip for the opportunity to shop at Navy Exchange or Uniform Store and eat at Subway or Burger King.

WHIDBEY ISLAND departed Palermo and transited the Strait of Messina for the second time December 9<sup>th</sup>. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND rendezvoused with JOHN LENTHAL for underway replenishment.

While en route the Adriatic Sea, stores for the ship were obtained by vertical replenishment from the CONCORD December 11<sup>th</sup>. The crew experienced the first winter weather of the deployment with cold winds and even a few short-lived snow flurries during the vertical

replenishment. Later the same day, weapons qualification was conducted on the 25mm, .50 cal, and M60 weapons.

WHIDBEY ISLAND arrived at the Adriatic Sea on the afternoon of December 13<sup>th</sup>. Although scheduled, all LCAC operations were cancelled during WHIDBEY ISLAND's time in the Adriatic due to rough seas and foul weather. However, other training evolutions were conducted such as Junior Officer ship handling, master helmsman training, loss of steering drills, and man overboard drills.

December 14<sup>th</sup> Lt Gen Peter Pace, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic and BGen James F. Amos, Deputy Commander of Strike Force South were flown aboard to address Marine troops.

December 15<sup>th</sup> marked the halfway point for WHIDBEY ISLAND's deployment. In celebration of the occasion, the crew dined on Alaskan snow crab legs, roast beef, and Beef Wellington. CDR Barrington cut and served the first slice of "half-way home" cake at an ice cream social held after dinner.

December 18<sup>th</sup>, WHIDBEY ISLAND rendezvoused with JOHN LENTHAL for underway replenishment of fuel. Later that evening, the ship once again transited the Strait of Messina for the third time en route Genoa, Italy.

After firearm familiarization courses were completed, a firing range was set up on the flight deck for 9mm qualifications December 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. WHIDBEY ISLAND arrived in Genoa, Italy on December 21<sup>st</sup> for its holiday port visit. Those members of the crew whose families flew from the states to join them during the holidays were able to enjoy a few days of leave. Other Sailors and Marines took one-day tours sponsored by MWR to sightsee in Florence and Pisa or ski in the Alps.

Christmas Day, the Mess Specialists provided another elaborate meal for those spending the holiday aboard with roast beef, turkey, ham, shrimp cocktail, and an assortment of desserts.

MWR sponsored a New Year's Eve celebration on the turntable with non-alcoholic champagne, a buffet of appetizers, music, videos, and party favors, so the crew of WHIDBEY ISLAND could ring in the millennium together.

Contrary to predictions of a "Y2K Crisis" on New Year's Eve, midnight came and went peacefully for WHIDBEY ISLAND.