



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS ARDENT (MCM12)
FPO AA 34090-1932

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From: Commanding Officer, USS ARDENT (MCM 12)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)
Subj: COMMAND HISTORY OF USS ARDENT (MCM 12) FOR 1994

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) USS ARDENT 290520Z APR 94 (OPPE Results)
(2) USS ARDENT 252330Z MAY 94 (OPPE Results)
(3) USS ARDENT 141333Z OCT 94 (FCT Quicklook Report)
(4) Commanding Officer's Photograph
(5) Commanding Officer's Biography

1. The command history of USS ARDENT (MCM 12) for calendar year 1994 is forwarded herewith in accordance with the requirements of reference (a).

2. History.

a. Part I. Command Composition and Organization.

(1) From 1 January 1994 to 31 October 1994 ARDENT was assigned to Mine Countermeasures Group THREE, Captain Richard Owens commanding.

(2) On 1 November 1994 a major reorganization of the Mine Countermeasures Community took place. Commander, Mine Warfare Command ceased to be Type Commander for the ships homeported in Ingleside, Texas; and a new entity, Naval Surface Group Ingleside, was created to serve as local agent for the new Type Commander, SURFLANT, and give the Ingleside ships "cradle to grave" assistance and supervision. In the new organization, ARDENT was assigned to Mine Countermeasures Squadron THREE, Captain Richard Owens commanding. ARDENT remained in MCMRON THREE through the end of 1994.

b. Part II. Chronology.

(1) 1 Jan 94 Inport, Naval Station Ingleside, for Holiday Standdown, berth B-3-1.

(2) 7 Jan 94 Breasted out at 0800 to allow AVENGER pierside. New berth: B-3-2.

(3) 11-14 Jan 94 Combat Systems Ship Qualification Trial (CSSQT) Phase II conducted by NAVSURFWARCEN MINEWARENGACT YORKTOWN VA.

(4) 13 Jan 94 Underway in Corpus Christi Oparea (CCOA)

for TB-26/TB-27 checks. Returned 1430 to B-3-2.

(5) 14 Jan 94 Shifted berths to A-8-2, outboard DEVASTATOR (MCM 6).

(6) 19 Jan 94 Vacated Alpha pier to accommodate mooring of frigates. New berth: B-3-2, outboard DEVASTATOR.

(7) 28 Jan 94 Hosted VADM William J. Flanagan Jr., COMSECONDFLT; RADM Pearson, COMINWARCOM; and RADM Leonard F. Picotte, COMPHIBGRU TWO, 1045-1115.

(8) 31 Jan 94 U/W CCOA for burial at sea.

(9) 1-5 Feb 94 U/W CCOA for engineering and type training.

(10) 7-11 Feb 94 ETG visit/assist.

(11) 14 Feb 94 Shifted berths to B-4-1.

(12) 17 Feb 94 Sponsor's dinner at Sandy Shores, Corpus Christi, 1900-2130.

(13) 18 Feb 94 Ship's Commissioning Ceremony.

(14) 22 Feb 94 ADM Mauz, CINCLANTFLT, visit.

(15) 28 Feb-3 Mar 94 Fleet Mine Warfare Training Center (FMWTC) filming evolution.

(16) 7-11 Mar 94 ETG visit/assist.

(17) 10 Mar 94 NAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA visit.

(18) 14-18 Mar 94 FMWTC filming evolution.

(19) 21-25 Mar 94 FMWTC filming evolution.

(20) 28 Mar-11 Apr 94 Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV).

(21) 19-22 Apr 94 Group Engineering Assessment.

(22) 26-28 Apr 94 Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE).

(23) 24-25 Apr 94 REOPPE.

(24) 26 May-5 Jul 94 Post-Delivery Availability (PDA) with Peterson Builders, Incorporated (PBI).

(25) 7-10 Jun 94 NAVMAC Team visit.

- (26) 8 Jun 94 Royal Thai Navy visit.
- (27) 6 Jul 94 U/W from Ingleside enroute Panama City,
Florida.
- (28) 9 Jul 94 1300, Arrived Panama City.
- (29) 11 Jul-26 Aug 94 CSSQT Phase III, Panama City.
- (30) 29 Aug-8 Sep 94 CSSQT Phase IV, Panama City.
- (31) 9-11 Sep 94 Transit from Panama City to Key West,
Florida.
- (32) 13-14 Sep 94 Transit from Key West to Port
Everglades, Florida.
- (33) 15-21 Sep 94 Acoustic Trials, Port Everglades.
- (34) 21-22 Sep 94 Transit from Port Everglades to Key
West.
- (35) 24-26 Sep 94 Transit from Key West to Cozumel,
Mexico.
- (36) 26-29 Sep 94 Port visit, Cozumel.
- (37) 30 Sep-4 Oct 94 Transit from Cozumel to Ingleside,
Texas.
- (38) 11-14 Oct 94 Final Contract Tials.
- (39) 17 Oct-20 Nov 94 Upkeep period, Ingleside, for PDA.
- (40) 28 Oct 94 VADM Katz, COMNAVSURFLANT, visit.
- (41) 7-17 Nov 94 Combat Systems Logistics Alignment.
- (42) 17 Nov 94 Shifted berths from A-6 to B-1.
- (43) 21 Nov-31 Dec 94 Post-Shakedown Availability (PSA),
Ingleside, Texas.

c. Part III. Narrative.

The new year, 1994, found ARDENT in Ingleside, Texas, the newly established homeport for the ship. On 3 January 1994, ARDENT began a two-week shipboard meter calibration availability with SIMA Ingleside. In the interim the ship shifted berths on 7 January from B-3-1 to B-3-2 to accommodate USS AVENGER (MCM 1). During the period 3-10 January, Commodore Richard Owens of MCMGRU THREE broke his pennant on ARDENT.

On 11 January the ship began phase II of the Combat Systems Ship

Qualification Trials (CSSQT) with NAVSURFWARCEN MINEWARENGACT YORKTOWN VA. This evolution involved an underway day on 13 January for testing of the TB-26/27 acoustic devices. Returning to port at 1430, ARDENT moored at the ammo berth, A-3, and took on ordnance (destructors and firing mechanisms). Water-borne CSSQT checks on the Mine Neutralization Vehicle (MNV) were completed pierside, 1700-1800. At 0900, 14 January, ARDENT once again shifted berths to A-8-2, outboard USS DEVASTATOR (MCM-6). On 19 January, upon the return of two decommissioning frigates to Ingleside, the ship shifted berths to B-3-2, again outboard of DEVASTATOR.

On 28 January, Vice Admiral William J. Flanagan Jr., Commander, SECOND FLEET, visited ARDENT at 1045. He was accompanied by Rear Admiral John Pearson, Commander, Mine Warfare Command, and Rear Admiral Leonard F. Picotte, Commander, Amphibious Group TWO. The brief visit ended at 1115.

On 31 January, the ship was underway in the Corpus Christi Operating Area (CCOA) to conduct two burials at sea. The cremains of ETC Jimmie Don Goins and ABFCS Daniel Fernandez were committed to the deep in a simple ceremony at 1000. Returning to port that afternoon, ARDENT made preparations for underway engineering and type training, conducted 1-5 February in the CCOA. Among the exercises completed were two General Quarters, with emphasis on main space fires; numerous engineering casualty control drills and evolutions; and two complete missions with the MNV (SLQ-48) to verify software installations. When dense fog precluded a scheduled 4 February return to port, the ship conducted two practice anchorages in the CCOA. The weather cleared at 2300, 4 February, and the ship was able to negotiate the transit up the Corpus Christi Ship Channel safely, mooring at berth A-2-2 at 0005, 5 February.

The following week, 7-11 February, ARDENT conducted engineering and damage control training with the Engineering Training Group (ETG) under the leadership of LCDR [REDACTED] and MMCS [REDACTED]. Captain R. H. Funke of the Afloat Training Organization rode the ship during this training evolution, as well as a group of SOSMRC students under the tutelage of Captain Bill Marks (USN, Retired).

On 14 February ARDENT shifted berths from A-2-2 to B-4-1 in preparation for the ship's formal commissioning ceremony on 18 February. A special dinner was held on the evening of 17 February at Sandy Shores Hotel, Corpus Christi, to honor the ship's sponsor, Mrs. Sue Ann Thompson, First Lady of the State of Wisconsin. The commissioning ceremony took place at 1000 the following day, 18 February 1994. Guest speaker was Congressman Kika de la Garza. RADM Pearson, RADM Williams of PMS-303, and Ellsworth Peterson, owner of Peterson Builders, Incorporated, also addressed the crowd of approximately 600 attendees. On the heels of the commissioning ceremony, 22 February, Admiral Mauz, Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Fleet, visited the ship.

The month of March was consumed mainly by engineering training and three filming evolutions, each conducted under the auspices of Fleet Mine Warfare Training Center, Charleston, South Carolina. A three-man film crew led by BMC [REDACTED] came aboard ship on 28 February to shoot the deployment and recovery of the TB-27 acoustic device, one of sixteen training films for mine warfare. The ship was underway 2-3 March in the CCOA in support of the filming. At the behest of MINEWARCOM, ARDENT also retrieved a MK 52 exercise mine shape on 2 March with assistance from an EOD detachment.

During the week of 7-11 March, the ship had another ETG visit for OPPE preparations. Team leader was again LCDR [REDACTED] assisted by GSCS [REDACTED]. The week's training included underway evolutions and drills in the CCOA on 8-9 March. On 10 March a nine-man team from Naval Safety Center, Norfolk, Virginia, came aboard to conduct a safety survey, 0730-1100.

During the next two weeks, 14-18 March and 21-25 March, Chief Meglen's film crew was again on board to shoot minesweep operations, specifically the launch and retrieval of the 6A and 6H sweep configurations. Underway filming days in the CCOA were 17 and 21-24 March. The ship also got underway on 15 March to conduct ECC drills.

ARDENT was inport Ingleside, 28 March-11 April, for an IMAV with SIMA. PBI completed numerous PDA work items during this period as well. On 5-10 April a team from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (ship's planning yard), under project engineer Gary Lusk, conducted ship checks for projected shipalts to be completed during PSA.

Following the IMAV the ship conducted a week of inport ECC and DC drills in preparation for the OPPE of 26-28 April. These preparations were somewhat hampered by emergent repairs to the bedplates of 1A and 1B SSDGs, 16-22 April. Under Material Officer, LT [REDACTED], Group THREE conducted an engineering assessment of ARDENT on 19-24 April, which included an underway day in the CCOA on 21 April for engine grooms. The EA was considered a reasonable success, and OPPE took place as scheduled, but with disappointing results (see enclosure (1)). Left alone and to its own devices during the period 29 April-23 May, the ship made preparations for the OPPE reinspection scheduled 24-25 May. An underway period, 5-6 May, for ECC drills punctuated this month of preparations. The REOPPE was an unqualified success (see enclosure (2)), and the crew felt somewhat vindicated for the poor showing of the previous month.

Following OPPE, 26 May-5 July, the ship remained inport, Ingleside, for PDA work. PBI accomplished some fifty work packages during this period, including the installation of four main engine rails and a much needed 24-volt ground detection system. A NAVMAC team led by Jerry Davis visited the ship in this period, 7-10 June, to evaluate MCM manpower needs. ARDENT

also played host to Captain Vichai Panpruk and two colleagues of the Royal Thai Navy on 8 June. On 10 June ARDENT acted as host ship for USS GLADIATOR (MCM~~BT~~1), which returned from CSSQT in Panama City, Florida, on that day. In conjunction with GLADIATOR's arrival, ARDENT entertained Commodore Owens and RADM Pearson (COMINELWARCOM), the two guests attending a command awards ceremony.

At 0900 on 6 July ARDENT got underway for a 90-day deployment, the main purpose of which was CSSQT in Panama City, Florida. Arriving at Panama City at 1300 on 9 July, the ship officially began CSSQT Phase III the morning of 11 July. The CSSQT Team Leader from Yorktown, Virginia, was Boyd Dee Jenkins.

CSSQT was generally considered a success, though it was not completed without several key material casualties. Following inport days on 11-12 July, ARDENT was underway for training in the Panama City Operating Area (PCOA) 13-15 July. The following week material problems began to surface. Power supply failures in the AN/SQQ-32 sonar kept the ship inport until 21 July, a day devoted to underway testing on the sonar. With assistance from NSWC Crane, Indiana, representative Wally Myers and Raytheon Inc. technician David Brown, the ship completed repairs to the 32 sonar on 25 July and resumed underway training, 26-29 July, in the PCOA.

The week of 1-5 August proved very productive. Underway minehunting operations included several successful Mine Neutralization System (MNS) missions. Two moored mine shapes were cut and recovered using the Mine Neutralization Vehicle (MNV) on 5 August. These were the first two successful, complete MNS missions accomplished in the life of the ship.

Minehunting operations and training continued the week of 8-12 August in the PCOA. The crew's minehunting abilities continued to improve, and the sonar operated well until the final mission on 12 August, at which time power supply failures again forced a premature end to minehunting training.

On 15 August the ship remained inport to troubleshoot and repair the 32 sonar. The following day, 16 August, ARDENT was underway at 0700 to stream the M Mk 5(a) straight tail in support of a test on a new Ship Service Pulse Generator (SSPG) installation. These scheduled minesweeping operations had to be postponed due to tropical storm conditions prevailing in the PCOA, the ship returning to port at 0900. On 17 August the weather abated sufficiently to allow the ship to get underway and satisfactorily complete the SSPG tests. ARDENT remained inport, 18-21 August, while ship's force technicians worked with Wally Myers of Crane and Raytheon tech Fred Galli on the 32 sonar problems.

The week of 22-26 August was devoted exclusively to minesweeping operations in the PCOA. The fantail crew rigged, streamed and retrieved a variety of sweep configurations and fully tested the

TB-26/TB-27 and SSPGs. A class problem with the SSPGs was evident on ARDENT as well, specifically, the inability to pulse at required amperages in all required wave forms. On 26 August the ship cut its first moored mine using a mechanical sweep (double-O). This evolution officially terminated CSSQT Phase III.

Troubleshooting and repair on the 32 sonar was brought to a successful conclusion on 27-28 August, just in time for the commencement of CSSQT Phase IV, 29 August. The week of 29 August-2 September involved a variety of underway minehunting exercises, danning operations and minesweeping evolutions in the PCOA. Following the Labor Day weekend, CSSQT Phase IV was successfully brought to a conclusion on 8 September as ship's force completed minehunting and minesweeping evolutions to the satisfaction of Yorktown team observers.

At 1030 on 9 September ARDENT got underway for Port Everglades, Florida, via Key West. Leaving the Panama City ship channel, in the vicinity of sea buoy "SA," the ship retrieved an otter which had been lost over the side on 8 September when a securing device failed. This proved to be a very useful minehunting/32 sonar evolution.

Arriving in Key West, Florida, at 1200 on 11 September, the ship anchored out until 0730 the next morning, when pier space became available at berth D-2 North. After taking on fuel, ARDENT proceeded to a berth at North Mole, Key West, at 1300. At 1400 the following day, 13 September, the ship got underway for Port Everglades, arriving there at 1000, 14 September, mooring at berth 22.

ARDENT conducted Acoustic Trials at Port Everglades in the period 15-21 September. During the first three days of the trial the ship remained inport for a mandatory hull cleaning and the installation of accelerometer discs and other acoustic test equipment. At 0900, 18 September, ARDENT was underway in the Port Everglades Operating Area (PEOA) for cavitation tests and machinery acoustic cuts, returning to berth 22 at 1845 that same evening. The ship was underway at 0700 the next morning for tests on an acoustic range set up two nautical miles east of Port Everglades. Range runs continued around the clock at various speeds, and with different machinery configurations, until 0900, 21 September, at which time the ship returned to port, berth 21, for equipment offload. The Acoustic Trials went very smoothly.

Underway at 1400 on 21 September for Cozumel, Mexico, ARDENT made a brief stop in Key West enroute, 22-24 September. The ship arrived in Key West at 1200, 22 September, tying up initially at the Truman Annex, inner basin. At 0745, 24 September, ARDENT moved to the fueling pier for fuel onload, departing for Cozumel at 1230 the same day.

The ship arrived in Cozumel for a port visit at 0830, 26 September. Captain Wilson, Naval Attache from Mexico City, visited ARDENT on 27 September, and throughout the port visit, 26-29 September, material support and services were provided to the ship by Mexican naval personnel from the Sector Naval Cozumel.

ARDENT departed Cozumel at 0800, 30 September, bound for homeport, Ingleside. Enroute, on 1 October, the minesweeping crew streamed the M Mk 5(a) rig to do megger checks prior to Final Contract Trials, scheduled later in the month. The CL-3 cable was also streamed and meggered. All checks were satisfactory. At 0815, 4 October, ARDENT arrived at Ingleside, mooring at berth A-6, having completed a very successful 90-day deployment.

Final Contract Trials took place on ARDENT during 11-14 October. An INSURV team under Captain John Mitchell arrived aboard late morning, 11 October, and the official in-brief occurred at 1300. At 0530, 12 October, the ship got underway in CCOA for the at-sea portion of the trials. The trials at sea went extremely well, and were perhaps more complete than any other MCM trials to date (see enclosure (3)). Returning to port at 0130, 13 October, the ship began the "open and inspect" portion of the trials at 0900 that same day. Final Contract Trials were successfully completed on 14 October.

The period 17 October-20 November was spent inport for upkeep. Numerous PDA work items were accomplished by PBI, including a stiffening modification to the SSDG bedplates. On 28 October, Vice Admiral Katz, COMNAVSURFLANT, came aboard for a brief ship visit. His stay included a ten minute address to the crew on the messdecks, which was very well received. PEO Mine Warfare also sponsored a Combat System Logistics Alignment aboard ARDENT during this upkeep period, 7-17 November. On 17 November the ship shifted berths from A-6 to B-1 in preparation for Post-Shakedown Availability (PSA).

The remainder of calendar year 1994, 21 November-31 December, was spent pierside, berth B-1, in PSA. A local contractor, Braswell Incorporated, won the contract, the end date of which was 17 February 1995.

d. Part IV. Supporting Documents. All pertinent supporting documents for this year's command history are appended herewith as enclosures (1) through (5).

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