



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS ASHLAND (LSD 48)
FPO AE 09564-1736

Rec'd 6/20/96

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5757

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06 JUN 1996

UNCLASSIFIED

From: Commanding Officer, USS ASHLAND (LSD 48)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,
Washington, D.C. 20374-0571

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5720.12E

Encl: (1) Command History
(2) Press Releases
(3) Ship's Public Affairs Releases
(4) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet/Picture of Commanding Officer

1. In accordance with reference (a), Enclosures (1) through (4) are forwarded.


T. R. HANLEY

COMMAND HISTORY

1. Command Composition and Organization:

a. Mission: Amphibious warfare; designed to transport Marines and their equipment to designated areas throughout the world, launch and support assault landing craft and helicopters during amphibious operations ashore.

b. Organizational Structure:

(1) Assigned to Commander, Amphibious Group TWO, Little Creek, Virginia.

(2) Concurrently assigned during UNITAS 36-95 and WATC 95 28 June through 09 December 1995 to United States South Atlantic Force, Atlantic Fleet.

c. Commanding Officer: Commander M. G. Hlywiak, USN.

d. Homeport: Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Norfolk, Virginia.

2. Chronology:

01 JANUARY - 13 FEBRUARY	EXTENDED PLANNED MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY AT METRO MACHINE SHIPYARDS NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
13 FEBRUARY	CONDUCTED FAST CRUISE
14-16 FEBRUARY	SEA TRIALS, DEGAUSSING RANGE OPERATIONS AND ANCHOR PMS AT ANCHORAGE LA-7 VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA
16-20 FEBRUARY	INPORT NAB LITTLE CREEK
21-23 FEBRUARY	UNDERWAY VACAPES OPAREA: SWING SHIP, HELO OPERATIONS, LCAC OPERATIONS
24-26 FEBRUARY	PORT VISIT ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND (ANCHORED): LCAC DEMONSTRATIONS, ASHLAND CREWMEMBERS PARTICIPATE AS GUEST SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY, OPERATIONALLY TESTED (OP-TESTED) COUNTERMEASURE WASHDOWN SYSTEM
26-27 FEBRUARY	UNDERWAY ENROUTE NAB LITTLE CREEK
28 FEBRUARY - 13 MARCH	INPORT NAB LITTLE CREEK: REFUELED JP5, CONDUCTED AMMUNITION ONLOAD COMPLETED CART II INSPECTION
13-17 MARCH	COMPLETED TAILORED SHIP'S TRAINING ASSESSMENT I

14-16 MARCH UNDERWAY VACAPES OPAREA:
 CONDUCTED MAIN SPACE FIRE DRILLS, NIXIE STREAMS,
 LCAC OPERATIONS

17-22 MARCH INPORT NAB LITTLE CREEK:
 LOCAL CUB SCOUT TROOP ONBOARD FOR TOURS, DIVERS
 CLEAN SHIP'S HULL
 COMCOGARGRU 42 (ASHLAND UNITAS COMMODORE) VISITS
 EMBARKED TUNISIAN OFFICERS, ENS NEHDI MOHAMED AND
 ENS SAIDANI
 CONDUCTED MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR CS2 MELVIN A.
 KUEHNE, USN (RET)

23 MARCH LT ██████████ DEPARTS ASHLAND

23-26 MARCH UNDERWAY ENROUTE GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA (GTMO) FOR
 TAILORED SHIP'S TRAINING ASSESSMENT (TSTA) I,
 REVISED VERSION OF REFRESHER TRAINING (REFTRA):
 CONDUCTED GENERAL QUARTERS DRILLS, MAN OVERBOARD
 DRILLS (DAY AND NIGHT SMALL BOAT AND SHIPBOARD
 RECOVERIES), SAR SWIMMER EXERCISES, ABANDON SHIP
 DRILLS, MOUNT 24 CIWS PRE-AIM AND CALIBRATE FIRE
 (PACFIRE), .50 CAL PACFIRES CONDUCTED BURIALS AT
 SEA FOR CS2 MELVIN A. KUEHNE, USN (RET) AND YN2C
 JAMES CASUCCI, USCG (VET)

26-29 MARCH INPORT GTMO - COMMENCE REFTRA:
 DUTY SECTION COLLISION, FIRE AND FLOODING DRILLS
 ACTUAL FLOODING ON THE 06 LEVEL: DAMAGE TO
 MULTIPLE COMPARTMENTS ON THE 05 AND 06 LEVELS
 CONDUCTED FLIGHT CRASH DRILLS

30-31 MARCH UNDERWAY DAILY GTMO OPAREA:
 CONDUCTED LOW VISIBILITY, SWEEP CHANNEL AND LOSS
 OF GYRO (NAVIGATION) EXERCISES, MAN OVERBOARD
 DRILLS, BATTLE PROBLEM GENERAL QUARTERS DRILL,
 CHEMICAL BIOLOGICAL RADIOLOGICAL ATTACK (CBR)
 DRILL, FLAGHOIST DRILLS, PRECISION ANCHORAGES,
 INPORT DUTY SECTION COLLISION, FIRE AND FLOODING
 DRILLS

01-02 APRIL INPORT GTMO

03-07 APRIL UNDERWAY DAILY GTMO OPAREA:
 CONDUCTED NAVIGATION EXERCISES, MAN OVERBOARD
 DRILLS, SWING SHIP, BASIC ENGINEERING CASUALTY
 CONTROL EXERCISES (BECCES), ABANDON SHIP DRILL,
 BATTLE PROBLEM GENERAL QUARTERS DRILL, CBR DRILL,
 MASS CASUALTY EXERCISE, MOUNT 21 CIWS PACFIRE,
 PRECISION ANCHORAGES INPORT DUTY SECTION
 COLLISION, FIRE AND FLOODING DRILLS

05 APRIL MOORED TO BUOY 'H' GTMO, CUBA

06 APRIL CONDUCTED TOWNING EXERCISE WITH EVELYN KAY

07 APRIL MOORED TO BUOY 'H' GTMO, CUBA

08-10 APRIL INPORT GTMO

11-14 APRIL UNDERWAY DAILY GTMO OPAREA:
 CONDUCTED NAVIGATION EXERCISES, MAN OVERBOARD
 DRILLS, 25MM, .50CAL AND M60 PACFIRES, BECCES,
 PRECISION ANCHORAGES, HELICOPTER DAYLIGHT LANDING
 QUALIFICATIONS (DLQ'S)

12 APRIL FLTRAGRU GTMO VISITS TO OBSERVE TRAINING

13 APRIL CONDUCTED HIGH LINE TRANSFER OF OSCAR WITH USS
 TRENTON (LPD 14)

14 APRIL COMPLETED TSTA I GTMO, CUBA

15-18 APRIL UNDERWAY ENROUTE NAB LITTLE CREEK:
 CONDUCTED BECCES, NIXIE STREAM

19-23 APRIL INPORT NAB LITTLE CREEK
 DEBARKED TUNISIAN OFFICERS

24-27 APRIL UNDERWAY VACAPES OPAREA FOR TSTA IV AMPHIBIOUS
 REFRESHER TRAINING:
 CONDUCTED LCAC OPERATIONS, ANCHORAGES, LCM8
 OPERATIONS, MASS CASUALTY EXERCISES SIMULATED
 AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULTS

25 APRIL CONDUCTED BURIALS AT SEA FOR MM1 CARROLL W. SHAY,
 USN, (VET) AND BT1 ARTHUR ULLRICH, USN (RET)

28-30 APRIL INPORT NAB LITTLE CREEK

01-03 MAY UNDERWAY TSTA IV:
 CONDUCTED GENERAL QUARTERS DRILLS, MAN OVERBOARD
 DRILLS, LCM8, AAV, AND HELO OPERATIONS AT ONSLOW
 BAY, NORTH CAROLINA

04-15 MAY INPORT NAB LITTLE CREEK
 COMPLETED COMBAT SYSTEMS READINESS REVIEW

08 MAY VADM KATZ, COMNAVSURFLANT VISITS

16-24 MAY UNDERWAY ONSLOW BAY OPAREA FOR TYPE COMMANDER'S
 AMPHIBIOUS TRAINING (TCAT)
 CTG 22.2 EMBARKED ONBOARD USS WASP (LPH 1) TAKES
 TACTICAL CONTROL OF USS SHREVEPORT (LPD 14), USS
 JACK WILLIAMS (FFG 24):
 CONDUCTED AGGRESSIVE SCHEDULE OF COORDINATED
 AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT SIMULATIONS UTILIZING LCM8'S
 AAV'S, LCU'S AND HELOS

16 MAY CLOSE IN RIG FUELING WITH USS JACK WILLIAMS
 (FFG 24)

18 MAY CONDUCTED SWING SHIP
SPECIAL MARINE AIR GROUND TASK FORCE (SPMAGTAF)
UNITAS, MAJ [REDACTED], VISITS

23 MAY CONDUCTED MASS CASUALTY DRILL
CONDUCTED DAY AND NIGHT UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT
WITH USNS JOHN LENTHAL (TAO 189)

24 MAY DEGAUSSING RANGE OPERATIONS

25 MAY - INPORT NAB LITTLE CREEK
25 JUNE PRE-OVERSEAS MOVEMENT (POM) STANDOWN

07 JUNE CONDUCTED SUMMARY COURT MARTIAL ONBOARD

19-22 JUNE DEPLOYMENT LOADOUT
EMBARKED CRYPTOLOGICAL DETACHMENT (CT DET)
EMBARKED EOD DETACHMENT
EMBARKED COAST GUARD DETACHMENT
EMBARKED SEAL TEAM SIX

23 JUNE FAST CRUISE
OP-TESTED ALL VITAL EQUIPMENT

26 JUNE - UNITAS 36-95/WATC 95 DEPLOYMENT
19 DECEMBER

26 JUNE UNDERWAY ENROUTE MOOREHEAD CITY, NORTH CAROLINA
EMBARKED DETACHMENT FOXTROT (CONTINGENTS FROM
BMU2 AND ACU2)

27 JUNE INPORT MOOREHEAD
EMBARKED SPMAGTAF PERSONNEL AND GEAR
UNDERWAY ENROUTE ONSLOW BAY
EMBARKED MARINE AIR DETACHMENT (HMM 365)
ANCHORED ONSLOW BAY
EMBARKED SPMAGTAF AAV'S

27-30 JUNE UNDERWAY ENROUTE NAVAL STATION ROOSEVELT ROADS
(NSRR), PUERTO RICO

28 JUNE CTG 24.13 (COMCOGARGRU 42) ASSUMES OPERATIONAL
AND TACTICAL CONTROL
CONDUCTED CLOSE IN RIG DRY HOOK UP WITH USS COMTE
DE GRASSE (DD 974)

29 JUNE CONDUCTED CLOSE IN RIG TOKEN PUMP AND TOKEN LIGHT
LINE WITH USS FAHRION (FFG 22)
CONDUCTED SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS FOR CO'S/OIC'S
LUNCHEON ONBOARD USS FAHRION

01-04 JULY INPORT NSRR

01 JULY DEBARKED HMM 365
EMBARKED USCOMSOLANT, RADM MAYER
TF 138 (USCOMSOLANT) ASSUMED OPERATIONAL AND
TACTICAL CONTROL
WHILE WORKING ON GIG, BMSN [REDACTED] LACERATES INNER
THIGH SEVERING THE FEMORAL ARTERY. SURGERY
PERFORMED AT NSRR HOSPITAL. BMSN [REDACTED] RETURNS
TO DUTY IN 3 WEEKS.

05-08 JULY UNDERWAY PRE-PHASE ZERO UNITAS IN VIEQUES OPAREA

05 JULY USCOMSOLANT CONDUCTED NAVIGATION CHECK RIDE
DEBARKED AAV'S FOR TRAINING, CONDUCTED MAN
OVERBOARD DRILLS

06 JULY USS FAHRION TOWED USS ASHLAND
USS ASHLAND TOWED USS FAHRION
USS COMTE DE GRASSE TOWED USS ASHLAND
LEAP FROGS WITH USS COMTE DE GRASSE MAN OVERBOARD
DRILLS

07 JULY EMBARKED AAV'S FOR TRAINING

08 JULY NSRR, WEPSTRAFAC AND FAIRCARIB VISIT TO OBSERVE
SIMULATED AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT

09-13 JULY INPORT NSRR
DEBARKED USCOMSOLANT
EMBARKED ARGENTINEAN OFFICER, LT MARTINEZ,
URUGUAYAN OFFICER, LCDR GONZALEZ, AND VENEZUELAN
OFFICER, ENS GRECI
SPMAGTF UNITAS RENAMED II MEF MARFOR UNITAS

12 JULY HOSTED APPROXIMATELY 450 UNITED STATES AND
FOREIGN DIGNITARIES, MILITARY OFFICIALS AND
OFFICERS FOR UNITAS KICK OFF RECEPTION IN FLIGHT
DECK TENT

14-18 JULY UNDERWAY PHASE ZERO UNITAS IN VIEQUES OPAREA:
SIMULATED COORDINATED AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULTS WITH
FRENCH LST FRANCIS GARNIER AND VENEZUELAN LST LOS
LLANOS

16 JULY COMMANDER AND COMMODORE SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY AND
COMMANDER BRAZILIAN NAVY VISIT TO OBSERVE
AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS

17 JULY MEDICAL EMERGENCY ONBOARD FRANCIS GARNIER
(LACERATED HAND): ASHLAND MEDICAL OFFICER, LT
[REDACTED] RESPONDS

18 JULY DRAGGED/RESET ANCHOR
MOUNTS 21 AND 24 CIWS PACFIRE

19 JULY INPORT NSRR

20-21 JULY UNDERWAY PHASE ONE UNITAS ENROUTE LA GUARIA,
VENEZUELA

21 JULY USS KALAMAZOO (AOR 6) JOINS FORMATION. CONDUCTED
UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH KALAMAZOO

22-24 JULY INPORT LA GUARIA, VENEZUELA
LIBERTY INCIDENT: SN [REDACTED] (SAR
SWIMMER) RESCUES DROWNING KALAMAZOO SAILOR AT A
LOCAL BEACH. SN [REDACTED] LATER RECEIVES THE NAVY
ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL FOR HIS QUICK ACTIONS

25-29 JULY UNDERWAY PHASE ONE UNITAS ENROUTE PUERTO LA CRUZ,
VENEZUELA

26 JULY CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS
KALAMAZOO CONDUCTED MEDEVAC: RETURNED TO LA
GUARIA, SGT [REDACTED] ATTACHED TO CT DET
SUFFERED ACUTE RENAL FAILURE

27 JULY REJOINED TASK FORCE

28 JULY CONDUCTED SPECIAL FORCES (SEALS AND EOD) COMBAT
RUBBER RAIDING CRAFT (CRRC) OPERATIONS

30 - 31 JULY ANCHORED PUERTO LA CRUZ, VENEZUELA

31 JULY LT [REDACTED] PROSPECTIVE MEDICAL OFFICER,
REPORTED ONBOARD
VENEZUELAN CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS VISITS

01 - 05 AUGUST UNDERWAY PHASE TWO UNITAS ENROUTE CARTAGENA,
COLOMBIA

02 AUGUST CONDUCTED GENERAL QUARTERS DRILL
LEAPFROGS WITH USS COPELAND (FFG 25) AND SALOM
(COLOMBIAN FRIGATE)

03 AUGUST MEDEVAC: COPELAND SAILOR SENT TO ASHLAND FOR
INFECTED ABSCESS

CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS
KALAMAZOO (LCDR [REDACTED] UNITED STATES COAST
GUARD, HAS THE CONN)

05 AUGUST CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS
KALAMAZOO

06-08 AUGUST ANCHORED CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA

09-13 AUGUST UNDERWAY PHASE TWO UNITAS ENROUTE NAVAL STATION
RODMAN PANAMA

09 AUGUST CONDUCTED SWEEP CHANNEL EXERCISE, DLQ'S WITH USN,
USCG AND COLOMBIAN HELOS

10 AUGUST CONDUCTED GENERAL QUARTERS DRILL IN CONJUNCTION WITH FREEPLAY EXERCISE
 CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS KALAMAZOO
 SIGHTED KAPOK IN WATER, ALL SHIPS IN TASK FORCE ALERTED FOR ACTUAL MAN OVERBOARD, SAR HELOS LAUNCHED, MUSTER REPORTS FROM ALL SHIPS SUBMITTED TO USCOMSOLANT. NO PERSONNEL CASUALTIES OR LOSSES REPORTED

12 AUGUST HELO CROSSDECK OPERATIONS WITH COLOMBIAN HELOS

13 AUGUST CONDUCTED MAN OVERBOARD DRILLS (CIVILIAN PACE INSTRUCTORS, MICHAEL TAMBURRINO AND ELIZABETH HAWES HAVE THE CONN)
 EMBARKED PANAMA CANAL PILOTS AND COMMENCED TRANSIT
 EXERCISED COUNTERMEASURE WASHDOWN SYSTEM IN GATUN FRESH WATER LAKE

14 AUGUST MOORED NS RODMAN
 CONNING OFFICERS DURING PANAMA CANAL TRANSIT:
 ENS [REDACTED], ENS [REDACTED], OSC [REDACTED], SMC [REDACTED],
 LT [REDACTED], LT [REDACTED], ENS [REDACTED],
 MS [REDACTED], MR TAMBURRINO, LT [REDACTED], LT [REDACTED],
 LTJG [REDACTED], LTJG [REDACTED], CWO2 [REDACTED], ENS [REDACTED],
 LTJG [REDACTED]

14 - 15 AUGUST INPORT NS RODMAN, PANAMA

16 - 18 AUGUST UNDERWAY PHASE TWO UNITAS ENROUTE MALAGA, COLOMBIA

16 AUGUST USS ASHLAND ENTERS THE PACIFIC OCEAN FOR THE FIRST TIME
 CONDUCTED DLQ'S WITH ARMY H47'S

17 AUGUST LEAPFROGS WITH COLOMBIAN FRIGATE INDEPENDIENTE

19 AUGUST ANCHORED MALAGA, COLOMBIA
 CONDUCTED AAV OPERATIONS

20 - 21 AUGUST UNDERWAY PHASE TWO UNITAS ENROUTE NS RODMAN PANAMA

20 AUGUST USCOMSOLANT VISITS
 COLOMBIAN COMMANDER OF ARMED FORCES, COMMANDER PACIFIC NAVAL FORCES, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, COMMANDANTE OF THE AIR FORCE, COMMANDANTE OF THE THIRD ARMY DIVISION VISIT
 LEAPFROGS WITH INDEPENDIENTE, COMTE DE GRASSE COPELAND AND FAHRION

22 - 24 AUGUST INPORT NS RODMAN, PANAMA
 EMBARKED SBU 26

25 - 26 AUGUST UNDERWAY PHASE FOUR UNITAS ENROUTE SALINAS
ECUADOR

25 AUGUST DLQ'S WITH ARMY H47'S

26 AUGUST CROSSING THE LINE CEREMONY
OFFICIAL CROSSING OF THE EQUATOR AT 081-14.59 W
LONGITUDE

27 - 30 AUGUST ANCHORED SALINAS, ECUADOR

30 AUGUST UNITED STATES DEFENSE ATTACHE OFFICE (USDAO)
VISITS

31 AUGUST - UNDERWAY PHASE FOUR UNITAS ENROUTE CALLAO, PERU
03 SEPTEMBER

01 SEPTEMBER MEDEVAC: DURING LCM8 OPERATIONS COMTE DE GRASSE
CREWMEMBER LACERATES 2 FINGERS, TRANSPORTED TO
ASHLAND FOR TREATMENT

04-06 SEPTEMBER INPORT CALLAO, PERU

07-11 SEPTEMBER UNDERWAY PHASE FOUR UNITAS AT SALINAS ANCHORAGE
FOR COORDINATED AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT SIMULATIONS
WITH THE PERUVIAN NAVY

08 SEPTEMBER USCOMSOLANT VISITS

11 SEPTEMBER BARELY AVOIDED COLLISION WITH UNLIT FISHING
VESSEL APPROXIMATELY 14 FT IN LENGTH. RAN
THROUGH BOAT'S FISHING NETS. EOD PERSONNEL, AOC
██████████ AND BM1 ██████████ DIVE ON SHIP TO DISENTANGLE
NETS AND LINE FROM SCREWS AND RUDDERS
DAY VISIT TO ANCON, PERU (ANCHORED)

12-13 SEPTEMBER INPORT CALLAO, PERU

14-17 SEPTEMBER UNDERWAY PHASE FOUR UNITAS ENR COQUIMBO, CHILE

17 SEPTEMBER CONDUCTED NIXIE STREAMS AND 40MM PACFIRE

18-20 SEPTEMBER INPORT COQUIMBO, CHILE
DEBARKED ARGENTINEAN, URUGUAYAN AND VENEZUELAN
OFFICERS

19 SEPTEMBER CO'S OF CHACABUCO AND RANCAGUA (CHILEAN LST'S)
VISIT

20 SEPTEMBER USCOMSOLANT VISITS

21-23 SEPTEMBER UNDERWAY PHASE SIX UNITAS AT PUNTA ALDEA, CHILE FOR COORDINATED AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT SIMULATIONS WITH CHACABUCO AND RANCAGUA TO INCLUDE NAVAL GUN FIRE SUPPORT (NGFS) FROM UNITED STATES, CHILEAN AND CANADIAN UNITS

24-25 SEPTEMBER ANCHORED COQUIMBO, CHILE

25 SEPTEMBER CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, ADM MICHAEL BOORDA, VISITS ALL UNITED STATES SHIPS IN UNITAS TASK FORCE

26 SEPTEMBER UNDERWAY PHASE SIX UNITAS AT PUNTA ALDEA, CHILE FOR ADDITIONAL AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS

27 SEPTEMBER UNDERWAY PHASE SIX UNITAS ENROUTE VALPARAISO, CHILE

28 SEPTEMBER - INPORT VALPARAISO, CHILE
02 OCTOBER

01 OCTOBER UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO CHILE HOSTED 80 PERSON RECEPTION ON ASHLAND

03 OCTOBER UNDERWAY PHASE SIX UNITAS ENROUTE TALCHUANO, CHILE CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH CHILEAN OILER MONTT

04-08 OCTOBER INPORT TALCAHUANO, CHILE

06 OCTOBER PERFORMED PROJECT HANDCLASP PRESENTATION

08 OCTOBER LIBERTY INCIDENT: GMGSN ██████████ MUGGED AND ROBBED

09-12 OCTOBER UNDERWAY PHASE SIX UNITAS ENROUTE PUNTA ARENAS, CHILE

10 OCTOBER COMMENCED TRANSIT IN CHILEAN INTERCOSTAL WATERWAY (CIW). CHILEAN PILOTS WERE LCDR ROBERTO LUENGO AND LT PABLO MULLER. EXITED WATERWAY AT CANAL DARWIN DUE TO SHIP'S INABILITY TO SAFELY NAVIGATE THROUGH THE ENGLISH NARROWS. THIS TENUOUS NAVIGATION DETAIL WOULD COVER 1100 NAUTICAL MILES OVER A 96 HOUR PERIOD

11 OCTOBER RE-ENTERED CIW

12 OCTOBER ENTERED THE MAGELLAN STRAITS CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT IN THE MAGELLAN STRAITS WITH CHILEAN OILER MONTT WHO WAS SIMULTANEOUSLY REFUELING HMS COOTENAY (CANADIAN FRIGATE). DURING THIS EXERCISE ALL THREE SHIPS EXECUTED 2 INCREMENTAL 10 DEGREE COURSE CHANGES WHILE CONNECTED

13 OCTOBER ANCHORED PUNTA ARENAS

14-15 OCTOBER UNDERWAY PHASE SIX UNITAS ENROUTE USHUAIA, CHILE

14 OCTOBER CONTINUED TRANSIT THROUGH THE MAGELLAN STRAITS
ASHLAND RE-ENTERED THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

15 OCTOBER ASHLAND, COMTE DE GRASSE, COPELAND AND FAHRION
ARRIVED AT CAPE HORN FOR PHOTOEX

16 OCTOBER ENTERED BEAGLE CANAL (6 HOUR NAVIGATION DETAIL)
ANCHORED USHUAIA, CHILE
CONDUCTED AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS DEMONSTRATION

17-20 OCTOBER UNDERWAY PHASE SEVEN UNITAS ENROUTE PUERTO
BELGRANO, ARGENTINA

18 OCTOBER MEDICAL EMERGENCY: DUE TO HEAVY WEATHER, SAFE
FALLS ON RMC(SW/AW) ██████████'S HEAD AND CHEST.
SHE SUFFERED A SPRAINED NECK AND CHEST BRUISING

20 OCTOBER DLQ'S WITH UNITED STATES AND ARGENTINEAN HELOS
CONDUCTED CLOSE IN RIG REFUELING WITH FAHRION AND
COPELAND (OVER 6 HOURS)

21 OCTOBER ANCHORED PUERTO BELGRANO, ARGENTINA
CONDUCTED AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS
UNDERWAY ENROUTE TO PIER

22 - 23 OCTOBER INPORT PUERTO BELGRANO, ARGENTINA
UNITED STATES DEFENSE ATTACHE (DATT), CAPT
STEWART, VISITS

23 OCTOBER ASHLAND PERSONNEL VOLUNTEER TO PAINT A LOCAL
SCHOOL FOR A COMMUNITY RELATIONS (COMREL) PROJECT

24-27 OCTOBER DAILY UNDERWAY TO AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS AREA:
CONDUCTED MULTIPLE SIMULATED AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULTS
FROM ANCHORAGE AND UNDERWAY. RECOVERED AND
LAUNCHED ARGENTINEAN AAV'S IN ASHLAND WELL DECK

24 OCTOBER AFT TUG LINES PARTED WITH LINES TRAILING IN
WATER, STOP AND LOCK REQUIRED ON BOTH SHAFTS,
LOSS OF STEERAGEWAY WITH SHOAL WATER 50 YARDS OFF
THE STARBOARD QUARTER AND PORT BOW, STEERING BY
ENGINES

26 OCTOBER TUGS LOSE CONTROL OF ASHLAND. ASHLAND BUMPS PIER
BETWEEN FRAMES 25 AND 40; NO DAMAGE NOTED AFTER
INVESTIGATION

28 OCTOBER ARGENTINEAN COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS TASK FORCE
VISITS

28-29 OCTOBER UNDERWAY PHASE SEVEN UNITAS ENROUTE BUENOS AIRES,
ARGENTINA

29 OCTOBER CONDUCTED BECCES AND MAN OVERBOARD DRILLS

30 OCTOBER 11 HOUR NAVIGATION DETAIL THROUGH MUDLANDS TO
REACH PORT

30 OCTOBER - INPORT BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA
01 NOVEMBER

01 NOVEMBER UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO ARGENTINA VISITS

02-04 NOVEMBER UNDERWAY PHASE NINE UNITAS ENROUTE RIO DE
JANEIRO, BRAZIL

02 NOVEMBER TUGS REACTED TOO SLOW IN BUENOS AIRES, SOUNDED
COLLISION ALARM, SHIP'S MIDSHIPS HIT NORTHEAST
CORNER OF PIER 'B' TRUE WIND WAS 000T AT 19 KNOTS
MINOR DAMAGE TO MULTIPLE VOIDS AND TANKS TO
INCLUDE BENT I BEAMS, WARPED DECKS AND BULKHEADS
AND DISTORTED PIPING
WATERTIGHT INTEGRITY MAINTAINED

03 NOVEMBER ENERGIZED COUNTERMEASURE WASHDOWN SYSTEM TO
INITIATE TOPSIDE WASHDOWN OF INDUSTRIAL GRIT
BUILT UP DURING STAY AT BUENOS AIRES

04 NOVEMBER MEDICAL EMERGENCY: EN2 █████ SLIPPED IN MAIN
MACHINERY ROOM (MMR) #1. HIS FOOT DROPPED INTO
1B CLUTCH ASSEMBLY TEARING OFF THE TOP OF HIS
STEEL TOED BOOT. HE AVOIDED SEVERE INJURY TO HIS
FOOT AND LEG BECAUSE HE WAS WEARING THE CORRECT
SAFETY GEAR. EN2 █████ HAD ONLY BRUISING TO HIS
TOES.
ACTUAL CLASS 'C' FIRE IN MMR #2 (#7 ABT DAMAGED
AND LATER REPAIRED)

05-06 NOVEMBER INPORT RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

06 NOVEMBER PERFORMED PROJECT HANDCLASP PRESENTATION

07-11 NOVEMBER UNDERWAY PHASE NINE UNITAS ENROUTE AND AT ANCHOR
MARAMBIA BAY

08 NOVEMBER SIMULATED COORDINATED AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT WITH RIO
DE JANEIRO (BRAZILIAN LSD)
SPECIAL FORCES OPERATIONS WITH BRAZILIANS
DEBARKED SEAL TEAM SIX

11-14 NOVEMBER INPORT RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL
DEBARKED SBU 26
DEBARKED EOD DET

12 NOVEMBER LCDR DELANEY (PXO) AND LT [REDACTED] (PNAV) CHECK ONBOARD

13 NOVEMBER COMCOGARGRU 42 VISITS TO SAY FAREWELL

15 NOVEMBER COMPLETED UNITAS 36-95

15-23 NOVEMBER UNDERWAY WATC 95 ENROUTE LOME, TOGO: CONDUCTED LAST MINUTE HELO OPERATIONS FOR EMERGENCY PARTS TRANSFER, BECCES, GENERAL QUARTERS, MAIN SPACE FIRE DRILLS, MEDICAL DRILLS, NIXIE STREAMS

19 NOVEMBER HOSTED CHARITY PIE TOSS TO BENEFIT COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN

23 NOVEMBER CROSSED PRIME MERIDIAN AND EQUATOR SIMULTANEOUSLY (00-00.- N/S AND 000-00.0 E/W) ALL PERSONNEL ONBOARD INITIATED AS DIAMOND SHELLBACKS

24-25 NOVEMBER INPORT LOME, TOGO

24 NOVEMBER MOORED, DIGNITARY VISITS, HOSTED RETURN CALLS LUNCHEON, PROVIDED GENERAL PUBLIC SHIP TOURS, CONDUCTED COAST GUARD BOAT TRAINING OPERATIONS, HOSTED +400 PERSON RECEPTION IN FLIGHT DECK TENT

25 NOVEMBER PERFORMED PROJECT HANDCLASP PRESENTATION, VOLUNTEERED TO BUILD WOMEN'S SHELTER LATRINES FOR COMREL PROJECT, CONTINUED GENERAL PUBLIC SHIP TOURS, CO-HOSTED UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO TOGO RECEPTION FOR +400 PEOPLE
LCDR [REDACTED] DEPARTS ASHLAND

26 NOVEMBER UNDERWAY WATC 95 ENROUTE TEMA, GHANA

27-28 NOVEMBER INPORT TEMA, GHANA

27 NOVEMBER MOORED, DIGNITARY VISITS, HOSTED RETURN CALLS LUNCHEON, PROVIDED GENERAL PUBLIC SHIP TOURS, CONDUCTED COAST GUARD BOAT TRAINING OPERATIONS, HOSTED +400 PERSON RECEPTION IN FLIGHT DECK TENT

28 NOVEMBER PERFORMED PROJECT HANDCLASP PRESENTATION, CONTINUED GENERAL PUBLIC SHIP TOURS, THE COMREL PROJECTS ENTAILED PAINTING OF A LOCAL SCHOOL AND A CHILDREN'S PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC WING

29 NOVEMBER UNDERWAY WATC 95 ENROUTE SEKONDI, GHANA. HOSTED THE FOLLOWING SHIP RIDERS: UNITED STATES EMBASSY PERSONNEL, RUSSIAN AND BRITISH DATT

30 NOVEMBER ANCHORED SEKONDI, GHANA
CONDUCTED AAV DEMONSTRATION
UNDERWAY WATC 95 ENROUTE ABDIJAN, IVORY COAST

01-03 DECEMBER INPORT ABDIJAN, IVORY COAST

01 DECEMBER MOORED, DIGNITARY VISITS, HOSTED RETURN CALLS
LUNCHEON, PROVIDED GENERAL PUBLIC SHIP TOURS,
CONDUCTED COAST GUARD BOAT TRAINING OPERATIONS,
UNITED STATES DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION AND IVORIAN
COAST PRIME MINISTER VISIT

02 DECEMBER GENERAL PUBLIC SHIP TOURS
PLAQUES PRESENTATION AT IVORIAN NAVAL BASE

04-07 DECEMBER UNDERWAY WATC 95 ENROUTE PRAIA, CAPE VERDE
ISLANDS

04 DECEMBER LOCATED A STOWAWAY ONBOARD
CREW CALLED TO QUARTERS TO SEARCH ALL SPACES FOR
ADDITIONAL STOWAWAYS

05 DECEMBER DETOURED NORTH TO SAN PEDRO, IVORY COAST TO TURN
STOWAWAY OVER TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

08 DECEMBER INPORT PRAIA, CAPE VERDE ISLANDS
MOORED, DIGNITARY VISITS, HOSTED RETURN CALLS
LUNCHEON, SHIP'S PICNIC AT EMBASSY RECREATION
AREA, PROVIDED VIP TOURS, SHIP TOUR FOR
CAPEVERDEAN MILITARY AND EMBASSY FORIEN STAFF,
FLIGHT DECK RECEPTION

09 DECEMBER COMPLETED WATC 95
COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS GROUP TWO ASSUMES SOLE
OPERATIONAL CONTROL

09-18 DECEMBER UNDERWAY ENROUTE MOOREHEAD CITY, NORTH CAROLINA:
ACTUAL PITCH CASUALTY, LOST #1 ATTACHED
CONTROLLABLE PITCH PROPELLER PUMP
CONDUCTED MOUNTS 21 AND 24 CIWS, .50 CAL, M60 AND
SMALL ARMS PACFIRES
CONDUCTED BECCES AND GENERAL QUARTERS FOR BATTLE
PROBLEMS

18 DECEMBER DEBARKED AAV'S AT ONSLOW BAY
EMBARKED LCU
INPORT MOOREHEAD CITY, NORTH CAROLINA
DEBARKED II MEF MARFOR UNITAS PERSONNEL
EMBARKED 135 TIGERS FOR TIGER CRUISE
UNDERWAY ENROUTE NAB LITTLE CREEK

19 DECEMBER DEBARKED DETACHMENT FOXTROT: LCM8'S, LARC'S AND
LCU
HOMECOMING!
DEBARKED CT DET

19-31 DECEMBER INPORT NAB LITTLE CREEK
 HOLIDAY AND POST DEPLOYMENT STANDOWN

20 DECEMBER MILVAN OFFLOAD
 EOD OFFLOAD

3. Narrative:

ASHLAND began 1995 in Metro Machine Shipyards in the midst of an extended Planned Maintenance Availability. In mid-February, upon completion of all scheduled jobs including those marked as female embarkation modifications for the recently embarked female crewmembers, ASHLAND set upon a shake down cruise that would test all vital systems.

In conjunction with the cruise, ASHLAND was assigned to represent Commander, Amphibious Group (COMPHIBGRU) TWO for Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) demonstrations at Annapolis, Maryland. While there, crewmembers were called upon to participate in the United States Naval Academy education system as guest speakers and panelists. Discussions centered on amphibious warfare, shipboard chain of command relationships and mixed gender crews.

Returning from Annapolis at the close of February, ASHLAND was quickly thrown into an accelerated work up cycle in preparation for an upcoming deployment. Due to operational commitments during the previous year, causing a delayed yard period, the normal 6-9 month work up training period was cut to 4 and a half months.

CART II was the first inspection and, though rough, was still completed above required standards. Next came re-familiarization with general shipboard operations and emergencies. ASHLAND remained in the local Virginia Capes (VACAPES) area to practice Basic Engineering Casualty Control Exercises (BECCES) including multiple Main Space Fire Drills (MSFDs) during Tailored Ship's Training Assessment (TSTA) I.

By the last week in March, ASHLAND was ready to tackle Fleet Training Group (FTG) Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (GTMO) for Refresher Training (REFTRA).

Despite continuous training enroute, a stroke of bad luck on the second day in port, 27 March, did not help matters. A firemain valve on the 06 level had been removed for repair. Though the affected portion of the system had been tagged out, excessive pressure caused the next butterfly valve in the system to fail and flooding ensued. Officer staterooms and Combat Information Center (CIC) suffered the greatest damage, but the crew quickly rallied to recover from the setback.

After three weeks of intense shipboard operations training, ASHLAND was evaluated with the highest marks.

Navigation team skills had been honed in the areas of radar navigation, magnetic compass and relative bearing navigation, precision anchoring and most importantly CIC/Bridge team cooperation. The signal bridge was lauded as the best seen by evaluators in "a long time." Deck department flawlessly conducted evolutions that had not been attempted in years (i.e. mooring to a buoy and towing) as well as those practiced on a regular basis (i.e. man overboard drills for both shipboard and small boat recoveries, underway replenishment and anchoring). Damage Control knowledge and skill reached a point where evaluators could not even defeat the crew with a mass conflagration without cheating. Duty section inport emergency teams became adept at responding to collisions, fire, flooding and rescue and assistance requirements. However, the ship left with Seamanship and Damage Control Training Teams onboard that could and would continue drilling and evaluating personnel.

After GTMO and a brief port visit at Little Creek, the ship was underway the last week in April for additional training. The ship operated in VACAPES OPAREA for Amphibious Refresher Training and TSTA IV. Working with LCAC's and LCM8's, ASHLAND conducted multiple boat control exercises daily until, at the end of the week, the CIC and Debark Control teams were able to effortlessly direct amphibious assaults both by radio and silently using signal light.

During the second portion of TSTA IV, ASHLAND sailed to Onslow Bay, North Carolina to repeat boat control training with Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAV's). Again with seemingly little challenge, the Command and Control Teams were able to simulate an amphibious assault well within established parameters.

Returning to homeport by mid-week, ASHLAND began preparations for her next major evaluation. The following week Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR) occupied the Operations Department and all satellite areas of responsibility.

Immediately after CSRR, ASHLAND was underway yet one more time for Type Commander's Amphibious Training (TCAT). CTG 22.2 embarked in USS WASP took tactical control of USS ASHLAND, USS SHREVEPORT, and USS JOHN WILLIAMS. During an intense 8 day period at the end of May, ASHLAND culminated her training built first at REFTRA, then during the solo operations of AMPHIB REFTRA, with up to three coordinated amphibious assault simulations per day with TG 22.2. These simulations groomed and tested knowledge acquired in the previous phases of training.

From 25 May until 23 June, ASHLAND's crew benefitted from a Pre-Overseas Movement standown period. Although 50% of the crew was on leave, the remaining personnel worked full days to ensure all preparations were complete prior to the ship's deployment. The week of 19-22 June was slated as Deployment Loadout week. In that week alone, ASHLAND brought on USS COMTE DE GRASSE's gig,

USCG 40 ft boat, 4 Yokohama fenders, 2 submarine fenders, Project Handclasp materials, and 30-40 milvans and conex boxes. Additionally, personnel from the various detachments assigned to ride ASHLAND, unloaded both professional and personal gear. All too quickly 23 June arrived. The crew performed a Fast Cruise to properly test vital equipment, and ensure familiarity with assigned billets in various emergency and battle situations.

The weekend passed too quickly for most, and suddenly, it was 26 June, Deployment Day. ASHLAND, embarking Detachment Foxtrot (contingents of Beach Masters Unit TWO and Assault Craft Unit TWO) in Thimble Shoals Channel, was underway enroute to Moorehead City and Onslow Bay, North Carolina. There ASHLAND embarked Special Marine Air Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) UNITAS. After a five and a half hour stay inport Moorehead and one hour anchored at Onslow Bay on 27 June, ASHLAND was fully loaded and ready to start UNITAS 36-95.

After rendezvousing with USS COMTE DE GRASSE (DD 974) and USS FAHRION (FFG 22), Commander, Coast Guard Group Forty two (COMCOGARGRU 42), took operational and tactical control. Enroute to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads Puerto Rico (NSRR PR), the three units conducted underway replenishment (UNREP) rehearsals including close-in-rig token fuel pumps and light line token transfers to ensure proficiency.

Upon arrival NSRR, United States Atlantic Force, Atlantic Fleet (USCOMSOLANT) assumed operations and tactical control of all three units. Task Force (TF) 138 remained inport through the Fourth of July. Underway for Pre-Phase Zero UNITAS from 05 through 08 July, ASHLAND continued proficiency drills with COMTE DE GRASSE and FAHRION executing towing, leap frogs and joint man overboard procedures on each other. For two days, ASHLAND detached and conducted amphibious operations at Vieques Island.

During her next inport period, ASHLAND hosted a highly successful 450 person UNITAS Kick off reception and embarked three foreign shipriders: LCDR Gonzales (Uruguay), LT Martinez (Argentina) and ENS Greci (Venezuela). On 14 July she was underway for Phase Zero UNITAS. The French LST Francis Garnier and the Venezuelan LST Loss Llanos were underway for an amphibious exercise off Vieques Island until July 18. The exercise involved multi-ship maneuvers and an amphibious assault with American, Venezuelan and French Marines.

After a one day rest at NSRR, the UNITAS ships began Phase One UNITAS with a three day transit to La Guaria, Venezuela. Enroute, all units practiced conning alongside one another, conducting UNREPs with USS KALAMAZOO (AOR 6), and executing tactical maneuvering. The ship's exchanged officers during the transit for training. All ship's participating in UNITAS entered La Guaria in parade, remaining inport until 24 July. While in La Guaria, several sailors took advantage of the local beach and

surf. Luckily for one KALAMAZOO sailor ASHLAND, Search and Rescue (SAR) Swimmer, SN [REDACTED] was present and alert to his needs when an undertow overcame him. SN [REDACTED] selflessly rushed to his assistance performing rescue breathing after towing the sailor back to the beach. SN [REDACTED] was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his efforts.

ASHLAND departed La Guaira on the 24th enroute to another Venezuelan port city, Puerto La Cruz. By the 26th she had made a U-turn for a Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC). Returning to La Guaria, SGT [REDACTED] was transferred to a local hospital for stabilization and further transfer to NSRR due to acute renal failure. ASHLAND rejoined the TF and, for the remainder of the transit, conducted UNREP with KALAMAZOO, tactical maneuvering exercises and war games with other vessels in the UNITAS group.

Outside of a visit by the Venezuelan Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), ASHLAND spent an uneventful port visit anchored in the harbor of Puerto La Cruz on July 30th and 31st.

Concluding Phase One UNITAS, ASHLAND began a 5 day underway period working with the Colombians during the commencement of Phase Two. While enroute to Cartagena, Colombia, all units again practiced conning alongside one another, conducted UNREP with USS KALAMAZOO (AOR 6), executed tactical maneuvering, played war games and exchanged officers during the transit for training. August 6 through 8 was spent inport participating in various diplomatic events.

For the next 4 days the UNITAS ships continued practice sessions as previously described and added helicopter crossdeck operations with foreign helos. During this UNREP with KALAMAZOO, however, aft lookout sighted a kapok floating in the water aft of the ship. Having just completed breakaway procedures, both ships immediately called away Man Overboard. USCOMSOLANT ordered Force wide quarters to determine if the Man Overboard could possibly be another ship's crewmember. In addition FAHRION's SH-2G, America, and Coast Guard Cutter BEAR's dolphin were quickly called upon for SAR duties. After an hour and three musters for ASHLAND, all ships returned negative loss reports to USCOMSOLANT. ASHLAND retrieved what was determined to be an ALOP's type life preserver that fell into the water as personnel were starting restow procedures on station.

At 1730 13 August after embarking 2 pilots, ASHLAND was ready to transit the Panama Canal. During the nine hour transit ASHLAND remained manned at Sea and Anchor Detail. She conducted a fresh water wash using the counter measure washdown system in Gatun (fresh water) Lake, passed through Gatus, Pedro Miguel and Mira Flores Locks and rotated through 16 conning officers. At 0230 on the 14th, ASHLAND moored at Naval Station (NS) Rodman. Though the transit itself was uneventful, most personnel were disappointed that the nighttime trip prevented the panoramic view that had been promised.

On August 16, ASHLAND entered the Pacific Ocean for the first time in her history. Prior to departing Rodman, she embarked Special Boat Unit (SBU) 26 for additional training. While practicing alongside conning and flight operations with army helos, ASHLAND travelled to Malaga, Colombia to demonstrate AAV operations. While anchored on August 20, Colombian Commander of the Armed Forces, Commander of the Pacific Naval Forces, the Minister of Defense, the Commandante of the Air Forces, the Commandante of the Third Army Division came to visit and observe. ASHLAND completed the day and a half transit back to NS Rodman and remained inport through the 24th.

Due to the Peruvian/Ecuadorian border war, Ecuadorian units did not participate in UNITAS 36-95. Phase Three consisted of only a short port visit to Salinas, Ecuador. On 26 August all United States units slowed to accommodate the Crossing the Line Ceremony. Wog night, the evening before, caught several shellbacks unaware. They found themselves duct taped together and assaulted with shaving cream and colored markers. Replacing the traditional Beauty Contest with a Talent Show, Wogs attempted performances that would please King Neptune and thus receive pardons from the next morning's initiation. Alas, though one team was successful, King Neptune's pardon was not seen and all participating Wogs earned their Shellbacks by completing the "torturous" passage predetermined by senior Shellbacks onboard.

Resuming required speed, ASHLAND reached Salinas and dropped anchor on 27 August remaining inport until the 30th. After a USDAO visit she travelled south for four days enroute Callao, Peru. While underway the UNITAS ships played more war games and rehearsed additional at-sea emergencies. On September 1st, a COMTE DE GRASSE sailor was MEDEVACED to ASHLAND after he lacerated two fingers. While assisting in the handling of LCM8 lines in heavy weather, his fingers were torn when caught between the line and boat bitts.

Spending a quiet port visit in Callao from 04 to 06 September, ASHLAND personnel took advantage of the break and sought good shopping and comfortable cafes in which to relax. By the 7th she was again underway for amphibious operations and a coordinated wartime scrimmage that incorporated an amphibious assault. Just after midnight on 11 September while enroute the anchorage site of Ancon Bay, ASHLAND avoided collision with an unlit 10-14 foot fishing boat by a mere 50 yards. No one was hurt and the small boat was not overturned. However, the lines and nets the small boat had put over the side became entangled in ASHLAND's screws and rudders. Expeditiously, the Engineers tagged out all required systems, and the Explosive Ordnance Device (EOD) Detachment personnel dove in relatively high currents and successfully removed the knotted nets and lines. Within 3 hours ASHLAND was underway once more. That afternoon she returned to Callao.

After a two day encore visit, ASHLAND headed for Coquimbo, Chile in accordance with Phase 6. (Phase Five was completed in Paraguay by EOD, SEAL and Marine contingents.) Steaming independently, the crew was afforded the opportunity to conduct various training and maintenance exercises including BECCE's, pacfires and Nixie streams. The day following ASHLAND's arrival in Coquimbo on September 18, the Commanding Officers of the two Chilean LSTs, CHACABUCO and RANCAGUA, visited the ship and presented the most in depth amphibious assault brief to date. During this inport period ASHLAND debarked all her foreign ship riders.

Underway on 21 September ASHLAND transitted to the local Punta Aldea Bay and anchored for amphibious operations. The next two days were spent simulating coordinated amphibious assaults utilizing the frigates and destroyers in various support roles including NGFS and decoy coverage. Returning to Coquimbo on the 24th, all UNITAS ships prepared for the CNO's visit.

Due to the top condition of ASHLAND's gig and the exceptional performance of her crew, they were selected to convey the CNO from anchorage site to anchorage site so that every unit was afforded the opportunity to benefit from his visit. His stay on ASHLAND, though brief, was informative and morale boosting. The colorful questions asked by all personnel were answered immediately, or addressed at a later date via direct mail from Washington.

After this major event, ASHLAND spent two days underway and arrived in Valparaiso, Chile on 28 September. She remained inport through 02 October. The predominant milestone in this port was hosting a reception for 80 people on the ship's bridge and bridgewings. As always the Food Service Division put on a spectacular event that was lauded for weeks thereafter by the ambassador and USCOMSOLANT. Departing Valparaiso, ASHLAND conducted an UNREP with the Chilean oiler MONTT and entered Talcahuano on the 4th of October.

The primary reason for this stop was for key personnel, from all ships, to attend the Chilean Intercostal Waterway (CIW) and Magellan Straits transit brief. This 96 hour journey covering 1100 nautical miles would require continuous stationing of the Navigation Detail and extended requirements placed on the Anchor Detail. Embarking Chilean pilots, LCDR Roberto Luengo and LT Pablo Muller, on October 9th, ASHLAND began her journey through the CIW. On the evening of the 10th ASHLAND detached from the other UNITAS ships and exited Canal Darwin since she was unable to execute the turns safely in the English Narrows. On the morning of the 11th, ASHLAND re-entered the Megellan Straits and performed yet another milestone in her history. While in the Straits, connected to MONTT for UNREP, who was simultaneously fuelling HMCS KOOTENAY, the three ships executed two incremental course changes of ten degrees each.

The morning of the 13th, ASHLAND anchored for one night at Punta Arenas. The next day she re-entered the Atlantic Ocean. After 2 days at sea and a visit to Cape Horn for a Photoex, the UNITAS ships entered Beagle Canal and anchored at the World's Southernmost City, Ushuaia, Argentina.

Closing out Phase Six UNITAS, ASHLAND departed Ushuaia enroute Puerto Belgrano, Argentina. During the four day underway period, ASHLAND refueled both FAHRION and COPELAND via close-in-rig. The evolutions totaled six and a half hours and were completed without incident.

On 21 October ASHLAND anchored at Puerto Belgrano and debarked U.S. AAVs. The remainder of the day was spent conducting wet well operations with Argentinean AAVs. Leaving the Marines in the field, ASHLAND entered port and stayed until 23 October. The 24th consisted of a day trip to anchorage and more AAV operations. The excitement on the return happened when the aft tug parted lines which trailed in the water. Having ordered both shafts stopped and locked, ASHLAND lost steerageway 50 yards from shoal water off both the port bow and the starboard quarter. Quick action on the part of line handlers and engineers restored steerageway before any casualty could occur. The ship then immediately suffered a steering casualty requiring the conning officer to maintain the ship's head using engines. The most challenging portion of this task was that a three knot current off the port beam required the ship's head to be 15 degrees off from the course made good. After regaining steering and a harrowing sea and anchor detail, ASHLAND finally made it pierside.

Underway again on the 25th, ASHLAND proceeded to anchorage and conducted an extended amphibious assault simulation that lasted through the 27th. Unintentionally, a major forest/brush fire was ignited by training personnel utilizing tracer and NGFS rounds. Despite attempts to dig fire breaks, the blaze became out of control and Argentinean firefighters had to be called. The Argentinians placed no blame on U.S. personnel and continued to fight the fire after ASHLAND's departure on the 28th.

Again using available time to conduct independent training, the engineers conducted BECCES and the ship handlers drilled Man Overboards. By the afternoon of the 30th, the ship was again inport. While the other UNITAS ships visited Montevideo, Uruguay, ASHLAND's crew enjoyed a relaxing and uneventful three day port visit to Buenos Aires.

On November 2, when the ship got underway for Phase Nine enroute Rio de Janeiro, another malady befell her. With winds at 19 knots from 000T and slow reacting tugs, ASHLAND was put in a position requiring the choice between two evils. If she backed down any further, the screws would contact the breakwater. Allowing the wind to carry the ship would cause it to drift into

the corner of the pier. Deciding that the latter was the best bet, the ship sounded the collision alarm and hit the corner of Pier 'B' amidships both, above and below, the waterline. The investigation revealed that watertight integrity was maintained, but I beams were contorted, bulkheads were warped and piping was bent in a few void compartments.

During this underway period another catastrophe was avoided by the proper use of safety gear. On November 4, EN2 [REDACTED] fell in MMR #1. His foot slipped into 1B clutch assembly, and the top of his steel toed boot was torn off. Because he was wearing the correct safety equipment (steel toed boots), he avoided severe injury to his foot and walked away with only bruising to his toes.

Arriving in Rio de Janeiro later that day with one further incident (a class 'C' fire in MMR #2 temporarily damaging #7 ABT), ASHLAND spent the 5th and 6th inport taking a break. On the 6th, eight ASHLAND personnel accompanied the Executive Officer to a local hospice for HIV positive children. The hospice would be painted later in the week by COMTE DE GRASSE sailors for their COMREL project, but ASHLAND's task was to present Project Handclasp materials. Offloading 8 pallets of goods, including clothing, various medical supplies (disinfectant, Band-aids, bug spray, etc.), Spanish and English books, vegetable seeds and a Singer sewing machine, ASHLAND crewmembers assisted in the media presentation that followed and later spent time playing with the children.

From November 7 to 11, ASHLAND left port and remained anchored at Marambia Bay, Brazil. Operating with the Brazilian LSD Rio de Janeiro (previously a Thomaston Class LSD), the ship conducted more amphibious operations and assault simulations. Special Forces also put the zodiacs to use. While at anchorage, SEAL Team Six debarked and returned to CONUS.

Returning to Rio on the 11th, ASHLAND closed out UNITAS 36-95 and debarked SBU 26 and the EOD Det inport Rio. During this time, COMCOGARGRU 42 visited the ship to praise, thank and bid ASHLAND farewell. Through the next couple of days, all the UNITAS units sent messages thanking ASHLAND for her utmost professionalism and dependable and unquestioning support. USCOMSOLANT reminded all personnel that the cruise could not possibly have been completed without ASHLAND and her crew.

On 15 November the ship began WATC 95 with a nine day journey to Lome, Togo. During the inport period, the ship suffered a casualty to 1B jack water/cooling water pump drive assembly. For the rest of the deployment, she would not have the support required to complete repairs to this equipment. However, despite this setback, ASHLAND would continue charging and meeting every task she had been given. Utilizing the time wisely the crew conducted at-sea drills, battle problem scenarios, planned maintenance on equipment, Nixie streams and, of course, BECCES

and MSFDs. On November 19, during a steel beach picnic, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Coordinator called upon the Wardroom to voluntarily sit in a pie toss booth and have pies thrown at them to benefit CFC. Needless to say, CDR Hlywiak volunteered and was promptly doused with a light whip cream mixture.

Also during this transit, ASHLAND completed yet another notable feat. At 0311, 23 November, ASHLAND simultaneously crossed the Prime Meridian and the Equator (00-00.0 N/S and 000-00.0 W/E). All personnel onboard were initiated Diamond Shellback and would be so known thereafter.

Entering Lome, Togo on November 24th ASHLAND began a frantic two day inport stay. As soon as the ship was moored, the CO was called upon to visit various dignitaries and pay his respects to local officials. While he was off the ship, the crew cleaned, preserved and painted to ensure the ship was ready for VIP visitors. The Food Service division prepared for a return calls luncheon to be held on the bridge. By the time lunch was complete, the Mess Specialists were preparing for the evening meal, in which ASHLAND would co-host a 450 person Ambassador's dinner reception at his residence.

Early the next morning a contingent of 35 volunteers left the ship to help build a women's shelter. This COMREL project had been prepared prior to the ship's departure from Virginia. Sufficient skills, tools and material were available to complete the task. Simultaneous with COMREL, the Project Handclasp Presentation was completed on the pier. Several people representing various groups, including a school and hospital, were present to receive the materials. Also, during this time period, the Food Service division was called upon to provide for a joint naval force picnic at the beach. Additionally, since the ship was open for general public tours all afternoon, duty section personnel were kept occupied for the whole day. Each minute of each day inport seemed to be occupied with some event, if not two or three simultaneously.

Before anyone had a chance to breath, the ship had departed Lome for Tema, Ghana where the whirlwind of events would repeat itself on the 27th and 28th of November. The only variation to the schedule was a Ghanian Navy hosted reception. The COMREL project consisted of painting a school and a children's psychiatric ward in a local clinic.

Departing Tema on the 29th, the ship had embarked U.S. Embassy personnel, the Russian Defense Attache (DATT) and the United Kindom DATT. After anchoring at Sekondi, Ghana the next day, these officials observed wet well operations. After hosting another return calls luncheon, ASHLAND departed for Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

With 01-03 December spent inport Abidjan, the ship had four days vice two to accomplish all her tasking. Though the first day followed much the same type of events as in the previous two ports, the schedule over the next few days seemed far more relaxed.

By the 4th, the crew was ready for the 4 day underway enroute Praia, Cape Verde Islands. The evening of the first day out to sea, a stowaway was discovered. The crew was called to quarters to search all spaces for additional stowaways. During his interview with a French speaking embarked Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) agent, the teenage stow away claimed that he climbed onboard via the sterngate. He then hid in one of the ladderwells. ASHLAND detoured north to San Pedro, Ivory Coast and used LCPL #2 to transport him to local authorities.

During the remainder of the transit, the ship conducted Man Overboard drills and SAR training. On 08 December ASHLAND entered Praia, Cape Verde Islands for a one day stay. The day followed the same schedule as that which it had experienced for the past three port visits. There were no new surprises, and the crew received a bonus opportunity of attending a ship's picnic at the U.S. embassy recreation center. COMREL was cancelled for the visit and Project Handclasp materials went directly to the embassy for distribution at a later date.

By December 9th, crewmembers were ready for the transit to Moorehead City. In the midst of conducting daily fire, flooding, security, steering drills, CIWS, .50 cal, M60 and small arms pacfires, General Quarters battle problems, ASHLAND suffered a casualty causing the loss of #1 attached Controllable Pitch Propellor (CPP) pump.

Before dawn the morning of 18 December, ASHLAND arrived at Onslow Bay and debarked the AAVs. The agricultural inspector arrived via LCU and conducted his inspection of the remaining equipment in the well deck during the 2 hour transit to Moorehead City. After extensive washdowns in the welldeck, the participating personnel were pleased that their work paid off when the inspector stated that all his findings were satisfactory. Inport Moorehead, II MEF MARFOR offload was completed in just under 2 hours. After embarking 135 tigers for the tigers cruise, ASHLAND was on her way home.

While in the vicinity of Chesapeake Light, Detachment Foxtrot and equipment debarked via LCU and LCM8's. ASHLAND then continued into Thimble Shoals Channel and the final Sea and Anchor Detail for deployment. Although the day was drizzling and raining, families, friends and loves ones were awaiting the ships arrival on the pier. Likewise, ship's company manned the rails with their tigers looking out expectantly.

For the next few weeks, though in a post-deployment and holiday standown period, all personnel onboard began working towards the next big event: Change of Command. Despite being back in the cold Virginia climate and the ever full work schedule, all personnel were glad to be in homeport to close out 1995.