



UNCLASSIFIED"

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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

CONFIDENTIAL

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IN REPLY REFER TO:
5720

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26 NOV 1997

[REDACTED] -- Unclassified upon removal of enclosure (2)

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

Subj: 1996 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPVAVINST 5720.12E

Encl: (1) Command History
(2) Supporting Documentation [IN CLASS FILE]
(3) Press Releases

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) through (3) are forwarded.

R. J. Gebert
R. J. GEBERTH
By direction

COMMAND HISTORY

1. Command Composition and Organization:

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

b. Organizational Structure: Assigned to Commander, Amphibious Group TWO, Little Creek, Virginia.

c. Commanding Officer: Commander Timothy R. Hanley, USN

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

2. Chronology:

C2F READY DUTY ARG	01 JAN - 30 MAR
HOLIDAY LEAVE AND UPKEEP	01 JAN - 10 JAN
IMAV, SIMA LITTLE CREEK	01 JAN - 28 JAN
CHANGE OF COMMAND	05 JAN
POST DEPLOYMENT UPKEEP	11 JAN - 28 JAN
HULL CLEANING	15 JAN - 17 JAN
LMA ASSIST	22 JAN - 26 JAN
PHIBTRNG, VCOA	29 JAN - 02 FEB
INPORT LITTLE CREEK	03 FEB - 11 FEB
TYT VCOA: LCAC OPS/DLQ'S	12 FEB - 16 FEB
UPKEEP, LITTLE CREEK	17 FEB - 06 MAR
TCAT, NC	07 MAR - 12 MAR
INPORT, LITTLE CREEK	13 MAR - 03 APR
IMAVC	01 APR - 30 JUN
DPMA	01 APR - 30 JUN
ENROUTE: NEWPORT, RI	04 APR - 05 APR
INPORT, NEWPORT, RI	06 APR - 10 APR
ENROUTE BOSTON, MA	10 APR - 11 APR
INPORT, BOSTON, MA	11 APR - 15 APR
ENROUTE LITTLE CREEK	16 APR - 17 APR
INPORT, LITTLE CREEK	18 APR - 06 MAY
INPORT MARINE HYDRAULIC INDUSTRIES	06 MAY - 08 JUL
ETG/ERAT PRE LOE ASSIST	24 JUN - 28 JUN

Enclosure (1)

SISCAL	01 JUL - 15 JUL
PMA/IMAV CONCURRENT	01 JUL - 30 AUG
INPORT, NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD	08 JUL - 21 JUL
INPORT, LITTLE CREEK	21 JUL - 19 AUG
AVCERT TECH ASSIST	22 JUL - 26 JUL
ERAT	29 JUL - 02 AUG
LOA	12 AUG - 14 AUG
SEA TRIALS	19 AUG
AMMO ONLOAD	19 AUG
DOCK TRIALS	20 AUG
ENVIRON HEALTH SURVEY	19 AUG - 23 AUG
HULL CLEANING	19 AUG - 23 AUG
STRL: VCOA	27 AUG - 29 AUG
WELL DECK CERT	30 AUG
UPK LITTLE CREEK	31 AUG - 22 SEP
IMAV POST PMA	31 AUG - 22 SEP
SAFETY STANDDOWN	04 SEP
AMMO ONLOAD	05 SEP
SAFETY STANDDOWN	06 SEP
AVCERT/ARE	09 SEP - 13 SEP
INCLINE SURVEY	13 SEP - 18 SEP
INDUSTRIAL HEALTH SURVEY	16 SEP - 20 SEP
INCLINE	19 SEP - 20 SEP
RESERVIST VISIT (35)	21 SEP - 22 SEP
ERAT	23 SEP - 27 SEP
POPS: DTIIA PHASE 2	23 SEP - 27 SEP
NJROTC EMBARKED (10M/4F)	23 SEP - 27 SEP
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	28 SEP - 29 SEP
POPS: DTIIA PHASE 2	30 SEP
DLQ'S 160 SOAR (3RD BATT)	30 SEP - 02 OCT
WIND ENVELOP TESTS	01 OCT
SSDS ST11A PHASE 2 TRIALS - WALLOPS	01 OCT - 04 OCT
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	05 OCT - 06 OCT
DTIIA PHSE 2	07 OCT - 10 OCT
ETG LTT	07 OCT - 11 OCT
LCAC OPS	11 OCT
TRANSIT BALTIMORE	11 OCT
INPORT BALTIMORE	12 OCT - 14 OCT
TRANSIT LITTLE CREEK	15 OCT
AM & PM OP	16 OCT - 17 OCT
SSDS DTIIA PHASE 2	16 OCT - 17 OCT
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	18 OCT - 20 OCT
USMCR AAV OPS	19 OCT

SSDS DTIIA PHASE 2	21 OCT - 25 OCT
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	26 OCT - 27 OCT
ERAT: PRECART II	28 OCT - 01 NOV
SSDS DTIIA PHASE 2	28 OCT - 01 NOV
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	02 NOV - 12 NOV
CART II	04 NOV - 08 NOV
TYCOMMEX	12 NOV
SSDS TESTING	13 NOV - 14 NOV
VIP VISIT	13 NOV - 14 NOV
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	15 NOV - 17 NOV
NAV CHECK RIDE	18 NOV
SSDS DTIIA PHASE 2	18 NOV - 22 NOV
SAFETY STANDDOWN	19 NOV - 20 NOV
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	23 NOV - 24 NOV
SSDS DTIIA	25 NOV - 26 NOV
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	28 NOV - 08 DEC
LMA	02 DEC - 06 DEC
CSOSS VALIDATION PHASE II	02 DEC - 06 DEC
TSTA I ETG: VCOA	09 DEC - 13 DEC
UPKEEP LITTLE CREEK	14 DEC - 20 DEC
HULL CLEANING	16 DEC - 20 DEC
HOLIDAY LEAVE AND UPKEEP	21 DEC - 31 DEC

3. Narrative:

USS ASHLAND (LSD 48) began 1996 winding down from an intense Uritas Deployment. The crew was enjoying a well deserved holiday leave and upkeep period. In spite of this, preparations were being made for the Change of Command between CDR Mike G. Hlywiak and CDR Timothy R. Hanley. This event occurred on 5 January. The remaining winter months of January and February passed unceremoniously, quietly at the Creek.

The optempo again was established with TCAT the first week in March. The ASHLAND in company with NASSAU (LHA 2) and PONCE (LPD 15) made the overnight transit to the beaches of Onslow Bay, North Carolina. For six of the scheduled twelve days, ASHLAND trained units of the 24th MEU. This training included ship to shore movement involving AAV's and helicopter operations. This training was unexpectedly shortened by adverse weather. Conditions were unsafe for AAV operations so the three ships headed home early.

Not to be kept in the Creek for long, ASHLAND set sea and anchor detail and again was on her way. On 06 April ASHLAND pulled in to Newport, Rhode Island for a week of intense, hands on training. While in Newport the ASHLAND served as school ship for Surface Warfare Officers School Command's Division Officer Course (SWOSDOC). Students attending SWOS went aboard ship for training tours, while ASHLAND crew members went ashore for training in the Buttercup (damage control trainer) and Fire Fighting Trainers at NETC.

Upon completion of the intensive training week in Newport, ASHLAND set out for Boston. The ship and crew were in Boston as part of the City's Marathon Weekend Celebration. The ship, while open to visitors, hosted several thousand tours on board.

ASHLAND completed April in Little Creek making preparations for entering the shipyard. On 03 May, ASHLAND's crew conducted an ammunition offload and on 06 May they pulled into Marine Hydraulic Industries (MHI).

MHI would generate the origins of the Ship's Self Defense System (SSDS). This transformation began with the installation of the Close in Weapons System (CIWS) Block I upgrade. Eventually the Combat Information Center would be completely stripped to bare metal deck, redesigned and rebuilt in a completely new fashion. The final piece of the SSDS puzzle was incorporated in the first week of July. The MK 216 Rolling Airframe Missile (RAM) launchers were installed. In addition to the SSDS installation, ASHLAND went through an entire ship alteration from the highest mast to the deepest ballast tank.

Hurricane season was less than kind to ASHLAND and her crew. On two separate occasions, ASHLAND was forced by impending hurricanes to change berths, making her transit only through the assistance of tug boats. She was transferred first from MHI to Norfolk Naval Shipyard and then on to the Quaywall at Little Creek for the duration of her availability.

29 August brought an end to ASHLAND's four month availability. It was time to begin sea trials and the operational development of SSDS. Each week during this period was spent off the shores of Wallops Island, VA, the test ground of SSDS. The training opportunities of each day of the next four

months were maximized. ASHLAND's crew was not only responsible for the development of this newest weapons system, but was also responsible in preparing for upcoming events in the basic training cycle. CART I, II and III were on the horizon. From reveille to taps, ASHLAND's crew participated in various evolutions ranging from CIWS shoots to main space fire drills.

The first week in November, ASHLAND encountered her first major milestone in the basic training cycle. Members of the Atlantic Training Group visited ASHLAND in her first major training assist. It was ASHLAND's time to shine. CART II was a huge success. ASHLAND set the standard for amphibious ships in the Atlantic. The months of hard work and training had proven worth while.

Upon the completion of CART II, ASHLAND was again underway, developing, training and testing. Logistic Maintenance Assessment (LMA) was to be held the first week in December. ASHLAND had one more week after LMA before the holiday standdown to prepare for CART III which was the first major event of the new year. It was another week of intensive training, self-assessment and preservation.

The final weeks in 1996 were spent unwinding in holiday leave and upkeep. The ASHLAND sailors had two and a half weeks of well deserved rest.

Officers assigned to ASHLAND as of 31 December 1996

CDR Hanley	Commanding Officer
LCDR Delaney	Executive Officer
LT [REDACTED]	Operations Officer
LT [REDACTED]	1ST Lieutenant
LT [REDACTED]	Chief Engineer
LT [REDACTED]	Supply Officer
LT [REDACTED]	Navigation Officer
LTJG [REDACTED]	MPA
ENS [REDACTED]	Electrical Officer
LTJG [REDACTED]	CIC Officer
LTJG [REDACTED]	Ast CIC Officer
ENS [REDACTED]	Communications Officer
ENS [REDACTED]	EMO
ENS [REDACTED]	Elect Warfare Officer

LTJG [REDACTED]
LT [REDACTED]
LT [REDACTED]
Ens [REDACTED]
LTJG [REDACTED]
LTJG [REDACTED]
CWO3 [REDACTED]
ENS [REDACTED]

Engineering Admin Officer
Dentist
Medical Officer
3rd Division Officer
1st Division Officer
2nd Division Officer
Bosn
Disbursing Officer