

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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

CONFIDENTIAL

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IN REPLY REFER TO: 5720 Ser CO/4 63 2 6 NOV 1997

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From: Commanding Officer, USS ASHLAND (LSD 48)

To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,

Washington, D.C. 20374-0571

1996 COMMAND HISTORY Subj:

Ref: OPVAVINST 5720.12E

Encl: (1) Command History

Supporting Documentation [IN CLASS FILE] (2)

Press Releases

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

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	-	80	JUL
ETG/ERAT PRE LOE ASSIST	24	JUN	-	28	JUN

SISCAL	01	JUL	_	15	JUII.
PMA/IMAV CONCURRENT		JUL			
INPORT, NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD		JUL			
INPORT, LITTLE CREEK		JUL			
AVCERT TECH ASSIST		JUL			
ERAT		JUL		-	
LOA		AUG			
SEA TRIALS		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	-	80	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 Unitas 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 and 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 trails 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

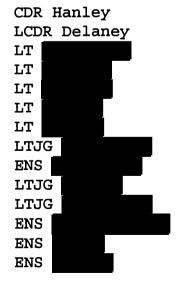
months were maximized. ASHLAND's crew was not only responsible for the development of this newest weapons system, but was also responsible in preparing for upcoming events in the basic training cycle. CART I, II and III were on the horizon. From reveille to taps, ASHLAND's crew participated in various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

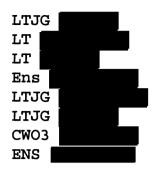
Upon the completion of CART II, ASHLAND was again underway, developing, training and testing. Logistic Maintenance Assessment (LMA) was to be held the first week in December. ASHLAND had one more week after LMA before the holiday standdown to prepare for CART III which was the first major event of the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



Commanding Officer
Executive Officer
Operations Officer
1ST Lieutenant
Chief Engineer
Supply Officer
Navigation Officer
MPA
Electrical Officer
CIC Officer
Ast CIC Officer
Communications Officer
EMO
Elect Warfare Officer



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