## USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) Fleet Post Office New York 09501

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From: Commanding Officer, USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)

To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B9)

Subj: Command History 1 January - 31 December 1970 Supplement

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12A

Encl: (1) 1970 Command History Supplement

1. In compliance with reference (a), the 1970 Command History Supplement is forwarded herein as enclosure (1).

R. S. VERMILA

ComphibLant (w/encl)
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COMPHIBRON TWO (w/encl)

## Command History - 1970 Supplement

# I. Chronology of Outstanding Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
17 March	Deployed with Amphibious Squadron TWO on Med 1-70
10 April	Conducted amphibious landing exercise at Carboneras, Spain
29 April	Captain Robert S. VERMILYA, USN, relieved Captain John M. MATHEWS, USN, as Commanding Officer
8 May	Conducted amphibious landing exercise at Lovo Santo, Corsica
5 June	Conducted amphibious landing exercise at Porto Scudo, Sardinia
6 June	VADM L. HEINZ, COMPHIBLANT visited the ship
6 June	Major stern gate casualty resulted in loss of stern gate
7 June	UH-2A conducted 6,000th consecutive safe landing on board
12 June	Stern gate recovered from 130 feet of water
16-30 June	Made temporary repairs to stern gate in Malta for safe transit to Norfolk, Virginia
13 July	Arrived Norfolk, Virginia
22 July-21 Sep	Repaired stern gate at Norfolk Naval Shipyard
30 July	USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) awarded the Battle Efficiency Award for excellence in combat readiness
30 July	USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) awarded the following departmental excellence awards: Amphibious Assault Award (4th consecutive), Air (4th consecutive), Engineering (4th consecutive), Supply (2nd consecutive), Operations (2nd consecutive) and Communications (1st award)
16 Nov	Deployed with Amphibious Squadron TWO on Med 3-70
17 Nov	Escorted USS SURPRISE (PG-97) and USS DEFIANCE (PG-95) from Morehead City, North Carolina to Naples, Italy on the first PG deployment to the Mediterranean
17 Dec	Conducted amphibious landing exercise at Porto Scudo, Sardinia

#### II. Basic Narrative

## A. Command Organization and Relations

- 1. Captain John M. MATHEWS, USN 16 December 1968 29 April 1970

  Captain Robert S. VERMILYA, USN 29 April 1970 present
- 2. Homeport Norfolk Naval Base, Virginia
- 3. Mission The mission of USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) is "to transport and land troops and their essential equipment and supplies by means of embarked landing craft or amphibious vehicles augmented by helicopter lift".
  - 4. Allowance 25 Officers 411 Enlisted men

    Complement 28 Officers 438 Enlisted men

## B. Operations

1. Deployments: Med 1-70 17 March - 13 July

Med 3-70 16 November - present

Norfolk, Virginia 1 January - 16 March 2. Inport Periods: Rota, Spain 1 April 2 April - 8 April Malaga, Spain 17 April - 24 April Genoa, Italy Cannes, France 25 April - 4 May Naples, Italy 20 May - 3 June 16 June - 30 June Valletta, Malta Rota, Spain 3 July Norfolk, Virginia 13 July - 27 July Norfolk Naval Shipyard 22 July - 21 September 22 September - 15 November Norfolk, Virginia 1 December - 3 December Rota, Spain 7 December - 12 December Naples, Italy 21 December - 29 December Barcelona, Spain 31 December - present Genoa, Italy

- 3. Significant Deployment Events As noted in Section I in Chronology
- 4. Special Topics
- a. Flight Time: Missions: 358 missions including 100 vertical replenishments using H-46, UH-2, and H-53 helicopters

- b. Ammo Expenditure: 1028 rounds of 3''/50 caliber ammunition were expended on air shoots, 420 on surface shoots
  - c. Troops Carried Med 1-70 575 Marine Officers and troops

Med 3-70 647 Marine Officers and troops

- d. Number of unreps 4 complete vertical replenishments while deployed in the Mediterranean  $^{\circ}$
- e. Development of Tactics USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) continued the development of the underway launch of tank landing vehicles conducting five such launches during the year.

USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) also proved an excellent support platform for the patrol gunboats testing various fueling and helicopter transfer techniques with USS SURPRISE (PG-97) and USS DEFIANCE (PG-95).

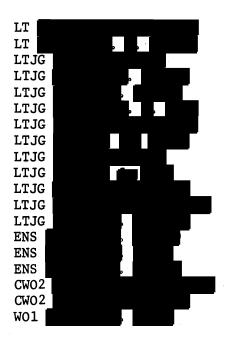
- f. Manning level of total personnel remained at or near 100% however, the leader paygrades (E-5 and above) remained in a personal casualty report stage for various rates especially machinist mates and damage controlmen.
- g. Medical/Dental Activities: A Dental Officer was added to the ship's allowance/complement and AUSTIN's first dental officer reported on board 3 July.
  - h. Awards/Commendations: As noted in Section I in Chronology
- i. Notable "firsts": PG escort to Mediterranean as noted in Section I in Chronology
- j. Press relations: USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) appeared in picture and print in various Norfolk newspapers as well as one radio program. The ship also received notoriety in various Naval newspapers and magazines.

#### III. Documentary Annexes

- A. Important Photographs see attached
- B. Roster of Officers and assigned billets as of December 1970:

 Commanding Officer
Executive Officer
Engineer Officer
Air Officer
Operations Officer
Chaplain
First Lieutenant
Supply Officer
Combat Cargo Officer

Enclosure (1) to 1tr Ser 240 dtd 7 Apr 1971



Medical Officer Dental Officer Flight Deck Officer Navigator Boilers Officer Gunnery Officer CIC Officer Assistant Supply Officer Main Engines Officer Disbursing Officer Second Division Officer Admin-Personnel Officer First Division Officer Electrical Officer Communications Officer Main Propulsion Assistant Electronics Material Officer Ship's Boatswain Damage Control Assistant

C. Biography and picture of Captain Robert S. VERMILYA, USN, attached