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

LPD4:RLP:wd  
5750  
Ser: 240  
7 April 1971

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

1970

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

*R. S. Vermilya*  
R. S. VERMILYA

Copy to:  
COMPHIBLANT (w/encl)  
COMPHIBGRU TWO (w/encl)  
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

2. Inport Periods:

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

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.

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:

CAPT Robert S. VERMILYA	Commanding Officer
CDR Charles A. WINTERS	Executive Officer
LCDR [REDACTED]	Engineer Officer
LCDR [REDACTED]	Air Officer
LCDR [REDACTED]	Operations Officer
LCDR [REDACTED]	Chaplain
LT [REDACTED]	First Lieutenant
LT [REDACTED]	Supply Officer
CAPT [REDACTED] USMC	Combat Cargo Officer

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LT	[REDACTED]	Medical Officer
LT	[REDACTED]	Dental Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Flight Deck Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Navigator
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Boilers Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Gunnery Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	CIC Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Assistant Supply Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Main Engines Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Disbursing Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Second Division Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	Admin-Personnel Officer
LTJG	[REDACTED]	First Division Officer
ENS	[REDACTED]	Electrical Officer
ENS	[REDACTED]	Communications Officer
ENS	[REDACTED]	Main Propulsion Assistant
CWO2	[REDACTED]	Electronics Material Officer
CWO2	[REDACTED]	Ship's Boatswain
WO1	[REDACTED]	Damage Control Assistant

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