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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)
FPO AE 09564-1707

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15 March 1995
Ser LPD-4/X:

From: Commanding Officer, USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy
Yard, Washington, DC. 20370

Subj: 1994 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Command History 1994 Chronology
(3) Command History 1994 Narrative
(4) Current Ship's Photo
(5) Welcome Aboard Package

1994

1. In accordance with reference (a), the 1994 Command History for USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) is forwarded.

A. M. PETRUSKA

Copy to:
COMPHIBGRU TWO

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

AUSTIN is an Amphibious Transport Dock Ship designed to transport and land ashore her complement of up to 900 Marines and their equipment by both helicopter and surface amphibious landing craft. AUSTIN carries enough equipment and supplies to sustain her assault force ashore for a period of 15 days, unsupported.

AUSTIN is homeported in Norfolk, VA and under the administrative command of Commander Amphibious Group TWO, RADM Picotte.

AUSTIN's Commanding Officer is Captain Andrew M. Petruska, United States Navy.

1994 COMMAND HISTORY

01-06 JAN INPORT NORFOLK, VA. PIER 20, BERTH 5.
03 JAN AVIATION CERTIFICATION/AVIATION READINESS
EVALUATION.
06 JAN U/W VACAPES FOR SEA TRIALS
06-14 JAN INPORT NORFOLK, VA. PIER 20, BERTH 5.
11-14 JAN CART PHASE II
14-17 JAN U/W ENROUTE GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA.
17 JAN ARRIVE GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA.
17-28 JAN U/W REFRESHER TRAINING/TSTA II GUANTANAMO BAY,
CUBA.
28-31 JAN U/W ENROUTE VACAPES
31 JAN ANCHORED LYNNHAVEN ANCHORAGE
01-04 FEB PHIBLTT
01 FEB ACOUSTIC TRIALS
04-07 FEB INPORT NORFOLK, VA. PIER 3, BERTH 6.
07 FEB U/W ENROUTE YORKTOWN NAVAL WEAPONS STATION
07-10 FEB INPORT YORKTOWN, VA. FOR AMMO ONLOAD
10 FEB U/W ENROUTE NORFOLK, VA.
10-22 FEB INPORT NORFOLK, VA. PIER 3, BERTH 6.
10-22 FEB INMARSAT INSTALLATION
15-17 FEB MARG 2-94 LANDING FORCE ACCOMMODATIONS INSPECTION
15 FEB QUALITY OF LIFE INSPECTION
16 FEB MEDICAL READINESS INSPECTION
19-20 FEB VISIT SHIP
22-23 FEB U/W ENROUTE ONSLOW BAY
23 FEB-09 MAR U/W TCAT/JTG WORK-UPS
24 FEB COMPHIBGRU 2 (RADM PICOTTE) VISITS
28 FEB-04 MAR ETG (MAYPORT DET)
01 MAR E-4 EXAM
03 MAR E-5 EXAM
08 MAR E-6 EXAM
09 MAR COMBAT SYSTEM ASSESSMENT
09-10 MAR U/W ENROUTE NORFOLK, VA.
10 MAR-04 APR INPORT NORFOLK, VA. PIER 7, BERTH 6.
16 MAR INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE SURVEY, AMMO ONLOAD, CMS ASSIST
VISIT
21-25 MAR CSTT PHASE I
23 MAR DENTAL READINESS EXAM
28 MAR-01 APR MAGAZINE SPRINKLER INSPECTION, CSRR PHASE II
04-05 APR U/W ENROUTE MOREHEAD CITY, NC.
04 APR NAVIGATION CHECK-RIDE
05 APR INPORT MOREHEAD CITY, NC.

Encl (2)

05-20 APR U/W ONSLOW BAY JTG 2-94/GWBATGRU PHASE II
WORK-UPS/FLEETEX/SOCEX

06 APR COMMANDING OFFICER CAPT. GORDON S. HOLDER FALLS
WHILE INSPECTING RHIB BOAT INJURING HIS KNEE.

07 APR COMPHIBRON 2 (COMMODORE VION) ARRIVES. COMMANDING
OFFICER DEPARTS VIA HELO FOR FURTHER MEDICAL
EVALUATION.

07 APR CDR. W. L. HARRIS ARRIVES AND ASSUMES COMMAND OF
USS AUSTIN.

20-21 APR U/W ENROUTE NORFOLK, VA.

21 APR-20 MAY INPORT NORFOLK, VA. PIER 3, BERTH 1.

12 MAY CAPT. A. M. PETRUSKA ASSUMES COMMAND.

21 APR-18 MAY POM LEAVE PERIOD.

20 MAY DEPLOYED FROM NORFOLK, VA. WITH USS GUAM, USS
TORTUGA, USS HARLAN COUNTY AS MARG 2-94 UNDER THE
TACTICAL COMMAND OF COMPHIBRON 2, COMMODORE VION.

21 MAY ARRIVE MOREHEAD CITY, NC. - ON LOAD ELEMENTS OF 26
MEU, INCLUDING UNITS FROM BATTALION LANDING TEAM
3/2, SEAL TEAM 8, SPECIAL BOAT UNIT 20, ASSAULT
CRAFT UNIT 2, LCU 1643, MARINE SERVICE SUPPORT
GROUP 26, AND NAVAL BEACH GROUP 2.

21 MAY-02 JUN U/W TRANS ATLANTIC ENROUTE PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND

02-05 JUN INPORT PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND WHARF SOUTH, BERTH 7,
ROYAL NAVAL PIERS.

05 JUN U/W FROM PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND.

05-06 JUN ANCHORED OFF POINTE DU HOC, FRANCE FOR
PARTICIPATION IN 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY.

06 JUN CONDUCTED STEAM PAST OF COLEVILLE CEMETERY.

07-09 JUN INPORT CHERBOURG, FRANCE.

09-16 JUN U/W ENROUTE SOUDA BAY, CRETE.

11 JUN RDVU W/USS INCHON FOR ARG TURNOVER.

12 JUN TRANSIT STRAITS OF GIBRALTAR.

16-20 JUN ANCHORED SOUDA BAY, CRETE.

20-26 JUN U/W SEA OF CRETE.

26-28 JUN U/W ENROUTE SUEZ CANAL.

28-29 JUN TRANSIT SUEZ CANAL.

29-31 JUN TRANSIT RED SEA.

31JUN-03 JUL TRANSIT GULF OF ADEN.

03-06 JUL U/W ENROUTE SOMALIA MODLOC

06-24 JUL U/W OPERATING OFF EASTERN COAST OF CENTRAL AFRICA.

18 JUL RENDERED AID TO VESSEL IN DISTRESS IN UNGAMA BAY,
KENYA

24-26 JUL U/W ENROUTE GULF OF ADEN.

26-28 JUL TRANSIT GULF OF ADEN
 28-30 JUL TRANSIT RED SEA
 30JUL-01AUG TRANSIT SUEZ CANAL
 01-03 AUG U/W ENROUTE TUNIS, TUNISIA
 03-05 AUG INPORT TUNIS, TUNISIA
 05-09 AUG U/W FOR TUNISIAN PHIBLEX
 07 AUG COMSIXTHFLEET VISITS
 09-14 AUG U/W ENROUTE VARNA, BULGARIA.
 14-15 AUG TRANSIT DARDENELLES/BOSPOROUS STRAITS/BLACK SEA.
 15-19 AUG INPORT VARNA, BULGARIA.
 17 AUG SUNSET PARADE FOR VIP'S INCLUDING CNO BULGARIA NAVY
 19 AUG U/W ENROUTE ISTANBUL, TURKEY. TRANSIT BLACK SEA/
 BOSPOROUS STRAITS
 19-22 AUG ANCHORED ISTANBUL, TURKEY.
 22-27 AUG U/W ENROUTE PALMA DE MALLORCA, SPAIN.
 22 AUG TRANSIT DARDENELLES.
 27 AUG-04 SEP INPORT PALMA DE MALLORCA, SPAIN. IMAV W/USS PUGET
 SOUND
 01 SEP SUNSET PARADE FOR VIP'S.
 04-05 SEP U/W ENROUTE ALMERIA, SPAIN.
 05-16 SEP INPORT ALMERIA, SPAIN. EXERCISE BETACOM, CONTINUE
 IMAV W/USS PUGET SOUND.
 08 SEP E-4 EXAM
 08-12 SEP CONDUCTED MARG OLYMPICS.
 13 SEP E-5 EXAM
 16-19 SEP U/W ENROUTE TOULON, FRANCE.
 19-23 SEP INPORT TOULON, FRANCE. CONTINUE IMAV W/USS PUGET
 SOUND.
 20 SEP E-6 EXAM.
 23-26 SEP U/W ENROUTE BRINDISI, ITALY.
 26-29 SEP INPORT BRINDISI, ITALY. PREPARATIONS FOR DYNAMIC
 GUARD.
 27-30 SEP ENGINEERING TRAINING GROUP.
 29 SEP-12 OCT U/W EXERCISE DYNAMIC GUARD.
 05 OCT COMPHIBGRU 2 (RADM PICOTTE) VISITS.
 12-13 OCT U/W ENROUTE RHODES, GREECE.
 13-18 OCT ANCHORED RHODES, GREECE.
 18-23 OCT U/W ENROUTE MALAGA, SPAIN.
 23-28 OCT INPORT MALAGA, SPAIN.
 28-29 OCT U/W ENROUTE ROTA, SPAIN.
 28 OCT TRANSIT STRAITS OF GIBRALTAR.
 29 OCT-04 NOV INPORT ROTA, SPAIN. VEHICLE WASHDOWN, IMAV W/USS
 PUGET SOUND.

04-16 NOV U/W TRANS ATLANTIC ENROUTE MOREHEAD CITY, NC.
16-19 NOV INPORT MOREHEAD CITY, NC. OFFLOAD ALL EMBARKED
UNITS.
19-20 NOV U/W ENROUTE NORFOLK, VA.
20 NOV ARRIVE NORFOLK, VA.
20 NOV-31 DEC INPORT NORFOLK, VA. PIER 7 BERTH 5. POM LEAVE. SIMA
AVAILABILITY.
11 DEC CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY.
14 DEC AUSTIN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY.
14 DEC COMPHIBGRU 2 (RADM PICOTTE) VISITS.

COMMAND HISTORY 1994 NARRATIVE

The year 1994 commenced with AUSTIN moored starboard side to pier 20, berth 5, Norfolk Naval Station making light off preparations after completion of a 4 month planned maintenance availability (PMA) at Marine Hydraulic International shipyard in Norfolk, Va. An Aviation Certification/Aviation Readiness Evaluation was conducted on 3 January.

On 6 January, AUSTIN conducted sea trials in the VACAPES, returning to pier 20 berth 5, Norfolk Naval Station later that same day.

From 11-14 January, AUSTIN completed CART Phase II. On 14 January AUSTIN sortied from Norfolk and arrived in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on 17 January to begin refresher training (REFTRA). REFTRA was conducted from 17-28 January during which AUSTIN conducted and passed every training evolution scheduled for a fourteen day period in just nine days. AUSTIN then steamed to Lynnhaven anchorage, Norfolk, embarked the Amphibious Training Team (PHIBLTT) and conducted numerous well deck recoveries. Acoustic trials were also held on 1 February. On 4 February, AUSTIN moored at pier 3, berth 6 Norfolk Naval Station.

On 7 February AUSTIN transited to Yorktown Naval Weapons Station, unloaded ammunition and returned to Norfolk Naval Station pier 3 berth 6 on 10 February. While inport, INMARSAT was installed. Additionally, the following events were conducted: Landing Force Accommodation Inspection, Quality of Life Inspection, Medical Readiness Inspection, and Visit Ship.

On 22 February AUSTIN sortied enroute Onslow Bay for 2 weeks of TCAT/JTG work-ups. After embarking the landing force and their support elements, rigorous amphibious landing exercises were conducted. A viable team began to form. On 24 February COMPHIBGRU TWO, RADM Picotte, arrived to evaluate progress. On 28 February, Engineering Training Group (Mayport Det) arrived and held extensive engineering drills as well as mainspace fire training.

On 9 March, after disembarking the landing force, AUSTIN departed Onslow Bay enroute Norfolk, VA. While enroute, a Combat

Systems Assessment was held. On 10 March, AUSTIN moored at pier 7, berth 6 Norfolk Naval Station for training and upkeep. During this inport period an Industrial Hygiene Survey, Ammo onload, CMS assist, Combat Systems Training Team (CSTT) Phase I, Dental readiness exam, Magazine Sprinkler Inspection, and Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR) Phase II were conducted.

On 4 April, AUSTIN departed Norfolk, VA enroute Morehead City, NC to pick up landing forces for JTG 2-94/GWBATGRU Phase II workups/FLEETEX/SOCEX. A navigation checkride was completed while inbound Morehead City, NC. AUSTIN's Navigation Team earned a grade of outstanding. Between 5-20 April extensive amphibious training was conducted.

On 6 April the Commanding Officer, Capt. Gordon S. Holder, fell while inspecting a RHIB boat, seriously injuring his left knee. On 7 April CDR W. L. Harris was flown in and assumed command of USS AUSTIN.

On 21 April AUSTIN returned to Norfolk, VA for a Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) leave period and final pre-deployment preparations.

On 12 May, Capt. A. M. Petruska assumed command during a change of command ceremony held on the flightdeck.

On 20 May, USS AUSTIN, USS GUAM, USS TORTUGA, and USS HARLAN COUNTY departed Norfolk, VA enroute Morehead City, NC as part of MARG 2-94. MARG 2-94 was under the operational control of Commander Amphibious Squadron Two, Commodore Vion, embarked on USS GUAM. Embarked on board AUSTIN was Seal Team Eight (Echo Company), and LCU 1643 from ACU TWO. The following morning, MARG 2-94 arrived in Morehead City, NC and embarked elements of 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable). Included were Battalion Landing Team 3/2, MSSG-26, Special Boat Unit 20, Beach Master Unit 2. On the afternoon of 21 May, MARG 2-94 sortied from Morehead City, NC enroute rendezvous with George Washington Battle Group for an eastbound Trans-Atlantic crossing.

On 2 June, AUSTIN arrived in Plymouth, England for a four day port visit. Various ceremonies were held commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Invasion of Normandy. On 5 June, AUSTIN

departed Plymouth, England enroute anchorage off Pointe Du Hoc, France. A steampast of Coleville Cemetery on 6 June helped create an appropriate backdrop for President Clinton during commemoration ceremonies held at the cliffs of Normandy.

On 7 June, AUSTIN arrived in Cherbourg, France for a port visit. AUSTIN departed on 9 June enroute Souda Bay, Crete. On 11 June, AUSTIN rendezvoused with USS INCHON for ARG turnover and then transited the Straits of Gibraltar.

Arriving in Souda Bay, Crete on 16 June, the crew enjoyed liberty until 20 June at which time AUSTIN weighed anchor for local operations off the northern coast of Crete.

On 25 June, MARG 2-94 received notification that the situation in Somalia was deteriorating and the presence of the MARG in that region was needed. After transiting the Suez Canal on 28-29 June, the Red Sea on 29 June - 1 July, and the Gulf of Aden on 1 July - 3 July, AUSTIN arrived off the coast of Somalia on 6 July. AUSTIN remained in the region until 24 July, standing by for any contingency in support of Operation Restore Hope. During this time AUSTIN and the MARG conducted amphibious training of the coast of Kenya.

On 30 July - 1 August, AUSTIN transited the Suez Canal via the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. AUSTIN arrived in Tunis, Tunisia on 3 August for a 3 day port visit.

AUSTIN was underway on the 5th of August for Tunisian PHIBLEX in which various amphibious exercises were conducted with Tunisian Marine Forces. A visit by Commander Sixth Fleet on 7 August highlighted the exercise. On 9 August, AUSTIN began her transit to Varna, Bulgaria.

On 14-15 August, AUSTIN transited the Black Sea via the Dardenelles, Turkish Straits, Sea of Marmara, and the Bosporous Straits enroute a port visit in Varna, Bulgaria. Arriving in Varna on the morning of 15 August, the following events were held: Visit ship, soccer matches, Joint Communication Drills, wreath laying ceremonies and a Sunset Parade for VIP'S. Varna proved to be an excellent liberty port. On 19 August AUSTIN transited to

Istanbul, Turkey. From Istanbul, Turkey, AUSTIN proceeded to Palma De Mallorca, Spain, arriving on 27 August for an IMAV with USS PUGET SOUND. Departing Palma on 4 September, AUSTIN arrived in Almeria, Spain on 5 September to continue an IMAV and conduct operation BETACOM. Other events conducted were: vehicle washdown/maintenance, MARG Olympics, semi-annual Command Assessment Team review, Command Qualification Boards, CART I meeting, and hearing conservation/heat stress training for the crew.

After departing Almeria on the 16th of September, AUSTIN proceeded to Toulon, France, mooring the morning of 19 September to continue an IMAV and make preparations for Operation DYNAMIC GUARD.

Underway on 23 September, AUSTIN headed for Torre Veniri via the Straits of Messina. On 26 September, AUSTIN conducted an amphibious rehearsal off Torre Veniri and then moored at Brindisi, Italy early in the afternoon. In Brindisi, a Pre-sail Conference for Operation Dynamic Guard was held and the Engineering Training Group arrived to conduct engineering drills and main space fire training.

After departing Brindisi on 28 September, AUSTIN proceeded to the Aegean Sea to conduct Operation DYNAMIC GUARD (a multi-national NATO exercise). While acting as part of the Advance Task Force, AUSTIN conducted a rehearsal off Doganbey, Turkey and an amphibious assault of Saros Bay, Greece.

Upon completion of this highly successful operation, AUSTIN anchored off the coast of Rhodes, Greece on 13 October for a well deserved 4 day port visit. Next, AUSTIN proceeded to Malaga, Spain arriving on 23 Oct.

AUSTIN departed Malaga and transited the Straits of Gibraltar on 28 October. Mooring in Rota, Spain on 29 October, AUSTIN completed vehicle/ship washdown, washdown inspection and MARG turnover. On 4 November, MARG 2-94 departed Rota enroute rendezvous with the George Washington Battle Group for a westbound Trans-Atlantic voyage.

After being detached off the coast of Bermuda, MARG 2-94 proceeded to Morehead City, NC to offload all embarked units and pick up friends and family for a "Tiger Cruise". Our departure date was delayed for three days due to Hurricane Gordon. AUSTIN finally sortied on 19 November enroute Norfolk, Va.

On 20 November, AUSTIN moored to pier 7 berth 5, and enjoyed an emotional homecoming. It had been a long and successful deployment. After the well planned festivities, AUSTIN commenced a post overseas deployment leave period.

During the month of December, AUSTIN held Christmas parties, leave periods, and a maintenance availability with SIMA Norfolk. A visit on 14 December by Commander Amphibious Group Two (RADM Picotte) capped off the year as he informed the crew that they had earned the coveted Battle Efficiency "E" award for the second consecutive year. This brought 1994 to a close.