



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS CARTER HALL (LSD 50)  
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From: Commanding Officer, USS CARTER HALL (LSD 50)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy  
Yard, Washington, D.C. 20374-0571

Subj: ANNUAL COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) Command Organization  
(2) Chronology of Events  
(3) Historical Narrative

1. In accordance with reference (a), the annual command history for USS CARTER HALL (LSD 50) for calendar year 1996 is hereby forwarded.

a. Command Mission. The mission of USS CARTER HALL is to transport and launch amphibious craft and vehicles with their crews and embarked personnel in an amphibious assault, to act as Primary Control Ship during amphibious assault and render limited docking and repair service to small ships and craft.

b. Command composition and organization

(1) USS CARTER HALL is homeported in Little Creek, Virginia and is assigned to Amphibious Group Two, commanded by RADM Wirt R. Fladd, USN.

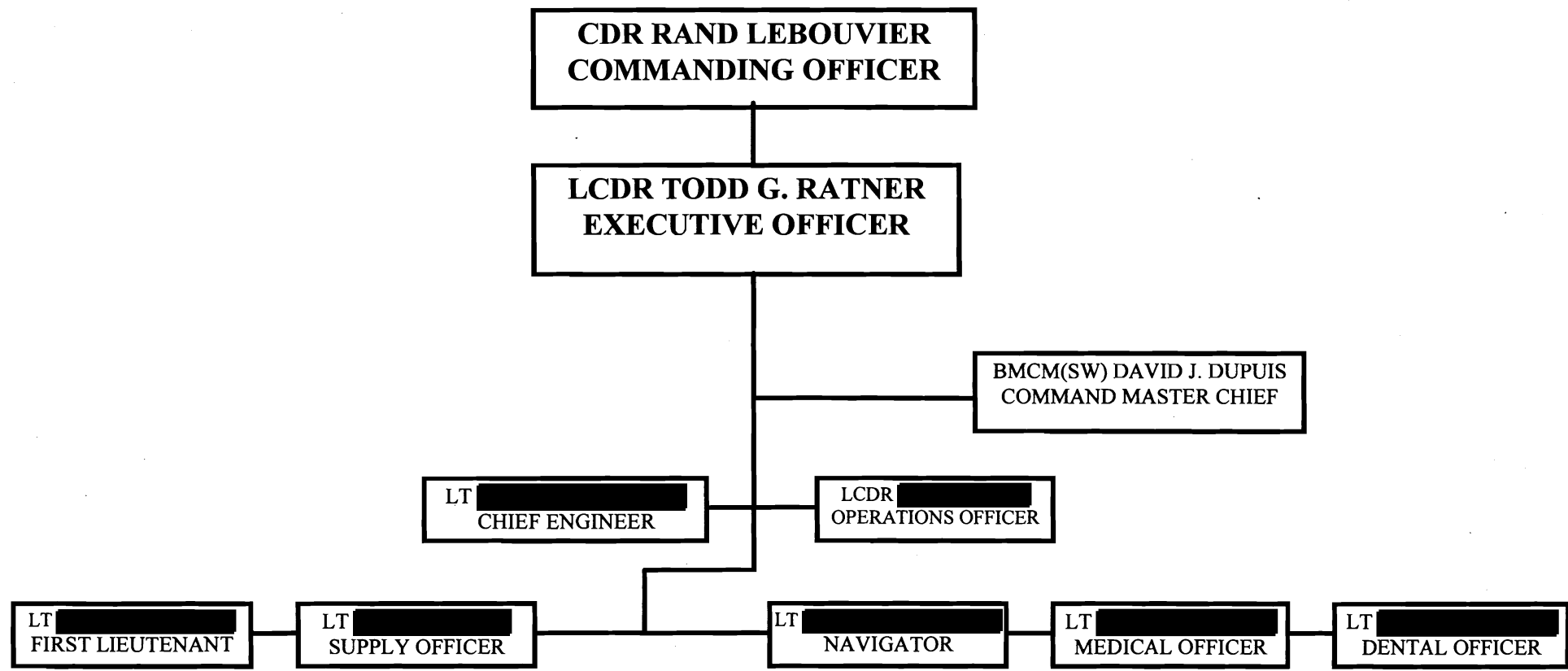
(2) The ship's crew consists of 21 officers and 325 enlisted men. The ship's organization is outlined in enclosure (1).

c. Chronology. Enclosure (2) is a chronology of the events and milestones reached during 1996.

d. Narrative. Enclosure (3) is a historical narrative of significant events in 1996.

  
R. D. LEBOUVIER

# USS CARTER HALL COMMAND ORGANIZATION



CARTER HALL (LSD 50)  
CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Event</u>  |
|-------------|---|
| 09 Jan 96   | 4 Tunisian Naval Officers report onboard for at-sea training.   |
| 12 Jan 96   | Underway for Mayport, Florida. Embarked 2 LCM-8's while anchored off Lynnhaven Inlet, VA, then continued en route.                |
| 15 Jan 96   | Held burial at sea ceremony for AOC C. E. Land Jr. and RMC T. Thweat. Held Martin Luther King Jr. ceremony on flight deck.        |
| 16 Jan 96   | Arrived in Mayport Florida. Moored alongside USS DETROIT at berth C-1-2.  |
| 17 Jan 96   | Underway from Mayport for training.   |
| 19 Jan 96   | CARTER HALL transits St. Johns River before mooring at Mayport.   |
| 22 Jan 96   | Underway from Mayport. Practiced precision anchorages and transiting swept mine fields with embarked ATG/STT/ETG personnel.       |
| 23 Jan 96   | Anchored off Mayport.   |
| 24 Jan 96   | Underway from anchorage. Conducted tow/be towed exercise with USS DETROIT.  |
| Jan 96      | Arrive buoy STJ. Piloted St. Johns River before mooring outboard USS DETROIT at Mayport.  |
| 30 Jan 96   | Underway from Mayport. Conducted ship's first Underway Replenishment-at-Sea exercise with USS DETROIT.                            |
| 01 Feb 96   | Fired offboard Chaff Launchers for the first time. Fired Close-in Weapons Systems (CIWS). Performed "leap frogs" with USS RAMAGE. |
| 02 Feb 96   | Conducted first Close-in Refueling with USS MCINERNEY (FFG 8). Moored Mayport, Florida.   |

Encl (2)

05 Feb 96 CATG visit onboard.

07 Feb 96 Underway for Exuma Sound, Bahamas.

08-10 Feb 96 Standardization Trials held in Exuma Sound, Bahamas.

13 Feb 96 Departed Exuma Sound for Nassau, Bahamas.

14 Feb 96 Moored, Nassau, Bahamas.

15 Feb 96 Official reception held on Signal Bridge for U.S. Ambassador and 25 Bahamian Embassy Officials.

16 Feb 96 Bahamian school children tour the ship.

18 Feb 96 Departed Nassau, Bahamas for NAB Little Creek, Va. Held small arms qualifications on flight deck.

19 Feb 96 CIWS PACFIRE held underway.

20 Feb 96 Moored, NAB Little Creek, Virginia.

05 Mar 96 4 Tunisian Naval officers depart after at-sea training.

06 Mar 96 Underway from NAB Little Creek, Virginia to Newport News Shipbuilding Drydocks. CARTER HALL enters drydock status.

13 Mar 96 Underway from Newport News Shipbuilding. Self-defense tracking exercise held.

14 Mar 96 Moored, NAB Little Creek, Virginia.

18-22 Mar 96 INSURV inspection conducted onboard.

19 Mar 96 Underway from NAB Little Creek to Virginia Capes Op Area (VACAPES). INSURV continues. Moored, NAB Little Creek, Virginia.

26 Mar 96 "E" painting ceremony held on bridge wings for two excellence awards: The Engineering/Survivability and Maritime Warfare Excellence.

01-05 Apr 96 Engineering Training Group (ETG), teams visits ship to conduct program review.

23-26 Apr 96 CART II held onboard CARTER HALL.

27 Apr 96 Underway from NAB Little Creek VA. to Lynnhaven anchorage. Set condition I Alpha. Launched and recovered PL #1 and #2 twice. Embarked, launched and recovered Armored Assault Vehicles (AAV's) four times.

28 Apr 96 Underway to area off FT Story Beach Virginia. Set condition I Alpha to launch and act as primary control ship for AAV's in ship to shore movement.

29 Apr 96 Set condition I Alpha for Landing Craft Air Cushions (LCAC's) operations. Executed three LCAC ship to shore to ship evolutions.

30 Apr 96 Set condition I Alpha for Landing Craft Utility (LCU) operations. Set flight quarters for helicopter operations.

01 May 96 Set condition I Alpha for Landing Craft Mechanized (LCM-8) operation. Launched and recovered PL#1 and PL#2.

02 May 96 Set condition I Alpha for LCM-8 alongside operations. Made final preparations for CARTER HALL's first pre-dawn assault.

03 May 96 Set condition I Alpha for LCM-8 launch. CARTER HALL's first pre-dawn assault. Underway from Lynnhaven Anchorage. Moored NAB Little Creek, Virginia.

07 May 96 Underway for Virginia Capes Op Area for at sea training.

08 May 96 Moored NAB Little Creek, Virginia.

16 May 96 Held tours for visiting British Royal Navy personnel.

18 May 96 Held all hands Ship's Picnic.

20 May 96 MS1 ██████████ becomes CARTER HALL's first Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist.

21-23 May 96 Safety Standown held for all hands.

30 May 96 Underway for Metro Machine Shipyard, Norfolk, Virginia. Moored Metro Machine Shipyard, Norfolk, Va. Began Post Shakedown Availability Period.

03-05 June 96 Logistics Management Assist Visit.

14 July 96 Underway for Portsmouth, Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia for hurricane safe haven. Moored, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

15 July 96 Hurricane Edouard passes west of safe haven area.

16 July 96 Underway for Metro Machine Shipyard Norfolk Virginia, Moored Metro Machine Shipyard, Norfolk Va.

14-16 Aug 96 Light-Off Assessment held in Engineering Dept.

26 Aug 96 Underway for Sea Trials, Virginia Capes Operating Area.

26 Aug 96 Completed Post Shakedown Availability. Completed Women at Sea Modification, along with other significant upgrades.

27 Aug 96 Moored NAB Quay Wall East.

03 Sept 96 Underway to Deperming Station.

03 Sept 96 Moored at Deperming Station, Elizabeth River, Norfolk Virginia.

05 Sept 96 Sortie to Norfolk Naval Base for hurricane safe haven, Moored Norfolk Naval base.

07 Sept 96 Hurricane Fran passes west of safe haven.

08 Sept 96 Underway to Little Creek Amphibious Base. Moored, NAB Quay Wall West. Conducted Ammunition Onload. Berth shift to Quay Wall East.

13 Sept 96 Underway for Lynnhaven Anchorage. Staged first ever amphibious demonstration

with Ukranian Naval Infantrymen during operation "Autumn Allies". Moored NAB.

17 Sept 96 Underway for Virginia Capes Operating Area for Engineering drills and offshore training.

20 Sept 96 Moored NAB Quay Wall East.

23-27 Sept 96 TSTA II held onboard.

30 Sept-5 Oct Underway for Virginia Capes Op Area. Conducted Engineering training with Engineering Training Group (ETG).

6 Oct 96 Moored NAB Little Creek.

10 Oct 96 Conducted Close-in Fuel Rig Demo for Argentinian Navy.

16-18 Oct 96 Conducted Annual Physical Readiness Test.

21 Oct 96 Underway for Va Capes Op Area

21-24 Oct 96 Conducted TSTA III with Engineering Training Group.

24 Oct 96 Moored NAB Quay Wall East.

12 Nov 96 Underway for Va Capes Op Area.

12-14 Nov 96 Conducted Engineering Certification.

14 Nov 96 Moored NAB Quay Wall East.

02 Dec 96 Underway for Thimble Shoals Anchorage.

02-06 Dec 96 After embarking members of ATG conducted TSTA III and Final Examination Period while underway in Va Capes Op Area.

06 Dec 96 Moored NAB Quay Wall East. ENS ██████████ ██████████ reported onboard becoming CARTER HALL's first female officer

13-14 Dec 96 Underway for Lynnhaven Anchorage. Embarked LCU 44 from Little Creek. Va.

14 Dec 96 Underway to Onslow Bay, NC Anchorage. Embarked 22nd Marine Unit. First ever full complement of Marines reported aboard.

15-17 Dec 96      Conducted PMINT in Onslow Bay NC. First ever  
Abrams M-1 tanks are onloaded and offloaded.  
Conducted Flight Quarters with Cobra attack  
helos for the first time.

18 Dec 96        Moored, NAB Little Creek, Virginia.

19-31 Dec 96     Holiday standdown.



CARTER HALL (LSD 50)  
Historical Narrative

1996 marked the first full year of USS CARTER HALL's transition to a fully operational member of the East Coast amphibious fleet. USS CARTER HALL is the second of four cargo variants of the WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41) class and is homeported at Little Creek Amphibious Base, Norfolk, Virginia.

In January, 4 Tunisian Naval Officers reported onboard for at-sea training becoming the first foreign nationals ever embarked on USS CARTER HALL. While enroute to Mayport, Florida for shakedown training, two burial at sea ceremonies were held for AOC C. E. Land Jr. and RMC T. Thweat. These ceremonies were also a first onboard USS CARTER HALL.

After arriving in Mayport on January 16th, USS CARTER HALL began training in a number of basic shipboard evolutions.

USS CARTER HALL began the month of February by firing her chaff launchers for the first time. The crew also tested the Close-in Weapons Systems (CIWS) and performed "leap frogs" with the USS RAMAGE. Another highlight in February was the first ever Close-in refueling exercise conducted with USS MCINERNEY (FFG 8) off Mayport Florida on February 2nd.

The ship's first foreign port visit occurred on February 14th when USS CARTER HALL moored pierside in Nassau, Bahamas. The next

day, an official reception was held on the Signal Bridge for a number of local dignitaries including the American Ambassador to the Bahamas. The ship arrived at Little Creek on February 20th.

The 4 Tunisian Naval officers departed during the first week of March. The second week of March was spent in drydock at Newport News Shipbuilding conducting warranty work on the starboard shaft pitch control. The ship then prepared for Final Contract Trials which was conducted from the 18th to the 22nd of the month in the Virginia Capes Operating Area. After returning to Little Creek, CARTER HALL's first "E" painting ceremonies were held on the bridge wings. The "E"s were awarded for Engineering/Survivability and Maritime Warfare Excellence.

The month of April began with a visit from the Engineering Training Group (ETG) who conducted a program review. The remainder of April was used to prepare for CART II which was held from the 22nd to the 26th. During the last week of April, USS CARTER HALL departed Little Creek for an anchorage located off Fort Story Beach, Virginia for TSTA IV which consisted of launching and recovering Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCACs) and Armored Assault Vehicles (AAVs) from the ship's Well Deck.

This training, integral to the ship's mission, culminated in a pre-dawn assault to the beach on May 3rd. This was the first beach assault from USS CARTER HALL. More at-sea training was performed in May in the VACAPES Op Area. Upon her return to Little Creek, USS

CARTER HALL held tours for visiting British Royal Navy personnel. On May 20th, MS1 [REDACTED] became USS CARTER HALL's first Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist.

The last underway period for the month of May, took USS CARTER HALL to Metro Machine Shipyard in downtown Norfolk, Virginia. This commenced the ship's Post Shakedown Availability Period. Many important modifications were performed including a reconfiguration of the Mess Decks and various modifications for embarking female crewmembers.

The Logistics Management Assist team visited the ship from June 3rd to the 5th.

Hurricane Eduoard forced USS CARTER HALL to seek safe haven at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard on July 14th and 15th.

One of the most important engineering evolutions was the Light Off Assessment which was held August 14th-16th. USS CARTER HALL completed Post Shakedown Availability and got underway for Sea Trials in the VACAPES Operating Area on August 26th. She returned to NAB Little Creek on August 27th.

The ship got underway for the Deperming station, located in the Elizabeth River, Norfolk, Virginia on September 3rd. After deperming was completed, USS CARTER HALL had to again seek hurricane safe haven at Norfolk Naval Station when Hurricane Fran approached the East Coast on September 5th. The ship returned to NAB Little Creek on September

8th and conducted an ammo onload the next day.

The first visit to Virginia by an Ukrainian Amphibious vessel culminated in "Autumn Allies," the first ever amphibious assault demonstration involving Ukrainian Infantrymen, on September 13th off Ft Story Beach. Before returning to Little Creek, the ship conducted engineering and other at-sea training in the VACAPES Operating area. She returned to NAB Little Creek on September 20th to prepare for TSTA II.

TSTA II was conducted from September 23rd - 27th. The rigorous training cycle continued when the ship was underway from 30 September to October 5th to conduct engineering drills and other at-sea training with the Engineering Training Group (ETG) in the VACAPES Operating Area.

On October 10th, the ship's Deck Department conducted a Close-In Fuel Rig demonstration for members of the Argentinean Navy. CARTER HALL was underway 21 - 24 October to conduct engineering drills.

USS CARTER HALL conducted its final Engineering Certification (ECERT) from November 12th to the 14th. CARTER HALL was the first ship to undergo a diesel ECERT under the new format.

The Final Examination Period (FEP) and TSTA III was conducted from December 2nd-6th in the VACAPES Operating Area after embarking members of the Afloat Training Group (ATG). This was conducted in Integrated Training Team format. This examination period effectively marked the

end of the year long training and shakedown period. USS CARTER HALL was deemed fully operational and ready for her maiden deployment to the Mediterranean in April of 1997. USS CARTER HALL returned to NAB Little Creek on December 6th where ENS [REDACTED] reported onboard becoming CARTER HALL's first female officer.

The final evolution for the year was conducted in Onslow Bay North Carolina as members of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit conducted wet well operations involving LCACs, AAVs and other assault craft. USS CARTER HALL successfully unloaded and offloaded M-1 Abrams tanks for the first time as well as conducting flight operations with Cobra attack helicopters. The training period served to introduce the ship's personnel to their Marine counterparts, and validated the load plan for deployment.

After debarking the Marines, USS CARTER HALL returned to NAB Little Creek on December 18th. The following day marked the beginning of the holiday stand-down period.