



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. As per reference (a), the annual command history for USS CARTER HALL (LSD 50) for calendar year 1999 is hereby forwarded.

a. Command Mission. The mission of 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 assaults and render limited docking and repair service to small ships and craft.

b. Command composition and organization.

(1) CARTER HALL is homeported in Little Creek, Virginia and is assigned to Amphibious Group Two, commanded by RADM J. Kevin Moran, U.S. Navy.

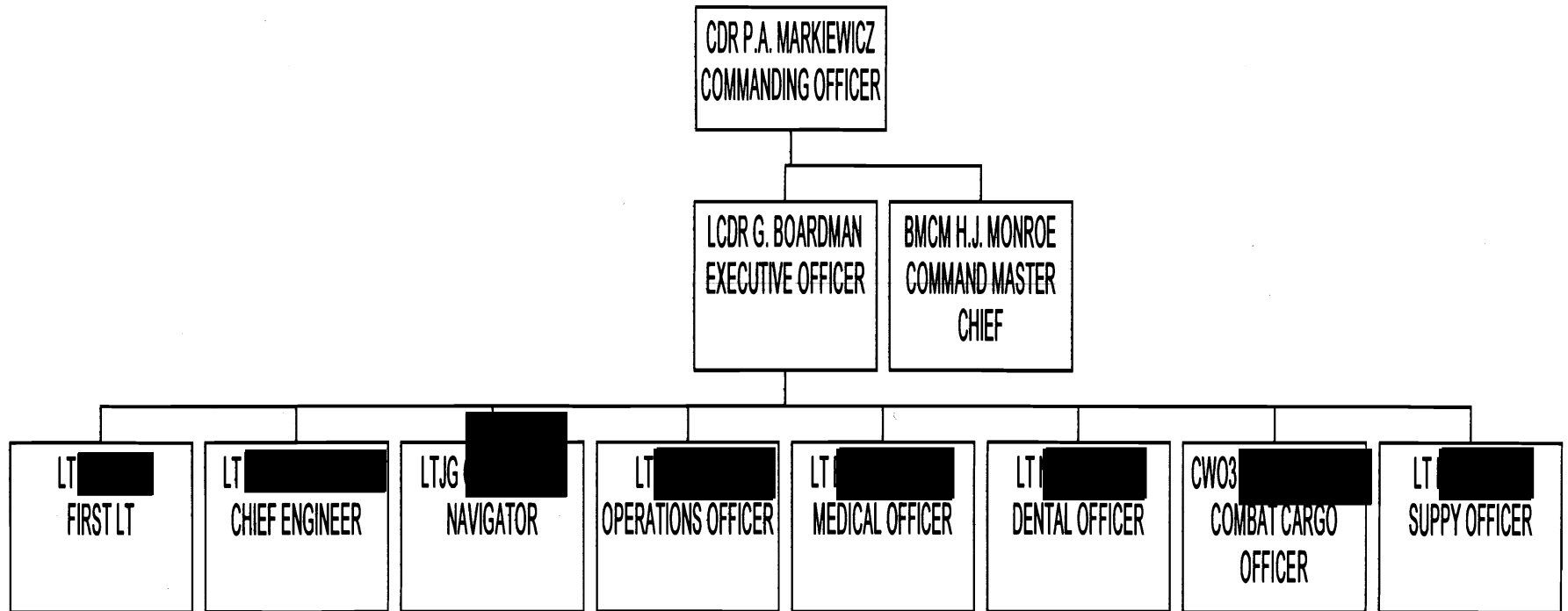
(2) The ship's crew consists of 22 Officers and 300 enlisted personnel. The ship's organization is enclosed in enclosure (1).

c. Chronology. Enclosure (2) is a chronology of the events and milestones reached during 1999.

d. Narrative. Enclosure (3) is a historical narrative of significant events in 1999.


E. J. DELANEY

CARTER HALL COMMAND ORGANIZATION



CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY 1999

<u>DATES</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
01-19 JAN	Inport NAB Little Creek, VA
19-21 JAN	Underway Virginia Capes Oparea
22-04 FEB	Inport NAB Little Creek, VA
04-10 FEB	Underway enroute New Orleans, LA
10-18 FEB	Inport New Orleans, LA
18-24 FEB	Underway for NAB Little Creek, VA
24- 22 MAR	Inport NAB Little Creek, VA
22-25 MAR	Underway enroute Onslow Bay, NC
25-26 MAR	Underway enroute NAB Little Creek, VA
26-05 APR	Inport NAB Little Creek, VA
05-08 APR	Underway enroute Onslow Bay, NC
08-09 APR	Underway for NAB Little Creek, VA
09-17 MAY	Inport NAB Little Creek, VA
17-21 MAY	Underway enroute Onslow Bay, NC
21-22 MAY	Underway enroute NAB Little Creek, VA
22-01 JUN	Inport NAB Little Creek, VA
01-04 JUN	Underway Virginia Capes Oparea
04-15 JUL	Inport NAB Little Creek, VA
15 JUL	Depart NAB Little Creek, VA for UNITAS/WATC 40-99
16 JUL	Onload Morehead City, NC/ Underway enroute Mayport, FL
20 JUL	Inport Mayport, FL/ Underway enroute Roosevelt Roads, PR
25-28 JUL	Inport Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico
28-31 JUL	Underway enroute Cartegena, CO
31-04 AUG	Anchored Cartegena, CO
04-05 AUG	Underway enroute Rodman, Panama
05-07 AUG	Inport Rodman, Panama
09-10 AUG	Underway enroute San Lorenzo, EC
10 AUG	Anchored San Lorenzo, EC
10-15 AUG	Underway enroute Manta, EC
15-17 AUG	Anchored Manta, EC
17-20 AUG	Underway enroute Salinas, EC
20-23 AUG	Anchored Salinas, EC
23-24 AUG	Underway enroute Paita, Peru
24-25 AUG	Inport Paita, Peru
25-27 AUG	Underway enroute Lima, Peru
27-01 SEP	Inport Lima, Peru
01-06 SEP	Underway enroute Ilo, Peru
06-07 SEP	Anchored Ilo, Peru
07-09 SEP	Underway enroute Coquimbo, Chile
09-11 SEP	Anchored Coquimbo, Chile

11-15 SEP	Anchored Peurto Aldea, Chile
15-16 SEP	Underway enroute Valparaiso, Chile
16-20 SEP	Inport Valparaiso, Chile
20-21 SEP	Underway enroute Talachuano, Chile
21-23 SEP	Inport Talcahuano, Chile
23-27 SEP	Underway Inland Waterway
27-28 SEP	Anchored Punta Arenas, Chile
28-30 SEP	Underway enroute Puerto Belgrano, Argentina
30-04 OCT	Anchored Puerto Belgrano, Argentina
04-07 OCT	Enroute Rio De Janeiro, Brazil
07-12 OCT	Inport Rio De Janeiro, Brazil
12-18 OCT	Anchored Marambaia Island, Brazil
18-23 OCT	Inport Rio De Janeiro
23-04 NOV	Underway enroute Capetown, South Africa
04-07 NOV	Inport Capetown, South Africa
07-09 NOV	Underway enroute Walvis Bay, Namibia
09-13 NOV	Inport Walvis Bay, Namibia
13-18 NOV	Underway enroute Lagos, Nigeria
18-20 NOV	Inport Lagos, Nigeria
20-21 NOV	Underway enroute Accra, Ghana
21-23 NOV	Inport Accra, Ghana
23-28 NOV	Underway enroute Abidjan, Ivory Coast
28-30 NOV	Inport Abijan, Ivory Coast
30-08 DEC	Underway enroute Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico
08-10 DEC	Inport Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico
10-14 DEC	Underway enroute Onslow Bay/Morehead City, NC
14 DEC	Inport Morehead City, NC/ Underway enroute NAB Little Creek
15 DEC	Moored NAB Little Creek, VA
15-31 DEC	Inport NAB Little Creek, VA/ Holiday stand-down period

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

To begin 1999, CARTER HALL and her crew, reinvigorated from their stand-down leave period, began with the evaluations and exercises which prepare amphibious ships, for deployment with their Amphibious Ready Group (ARG). January began with preparations in port for the ship to get underway later in the month for work along the Virginia and North Carolina coasts in cooperation with Marine forces.

During the months of February, March, and April, CARTER HALL took part in exercises with the units designated as Marine Forces (MARFOR) UNITAS for the UNITAS/West African Training Cruise (WATC) 40-99 deployment. UNITAS was the name given to the deployment because in Latin, the derivative for all South American languages, it means unity. During this time, the ship's crew and their counterparts in the Marines' units honed their skills in conducting amphibious assaults, utilizing all participating units from the AAVs and LCU 1644, to working with the Beachmasters and their supporting elements from units of Marine Force Recon. The remaining time in these months was committed to inport periods finalizing all corrective maintenance to the ship and necessary installations/modifications to accommodate the embarked Marines.

Prior to departing for the UNITAS deployment, CARTER HALL took her last opportunity to prepare for deployment in port, and allow the crew to share their last few weeks with their families. On July 15, 1999, CARTER HALL departed Little Creek, VA for UNITAS/WATC 40-99. This journey would have them circumnavigate South America, travel along the western coast of Africa, and transit both hemispheres of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans for the next five months.

UNITAS is an annual commitment by the United States Navy and Marine Corps to conduct exercises and operations in cooperation with the armed forces of the countries of South America. During UNITAS, CARTER HALL was one of the ships under the command of CAPT Debout, USN, Commander, Destroyer Squadron 6, in company with USS O'BANNON, USS MCINERNEY, USS CORPUS CHRISTI, and USCGC FORWARD. CARTER HALL transited the Panama Canal, Chilean Inland Waterway, and Strait of Magellan, visited the countries of Columbia, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, and

Encl (3)

Brazil, crossed the Equator, and conducted amphibious and naval operations in the waters and littorals around every coast of South America. At the conclusion of UNITAS, CARTER HALL detached to proceed independently to conduct a West African Training Cruise (WATC).

WATC is a Joint Chiefs of Staff directed, US Commander in Chief, Europe scheduled, and US Commander in Chief Naval Forces Europe conducted bi-annual naval exercise. The purpose of WATC is to improve cooperation, interoperability, and trust between the Sub-Saharan nations of Western Africa and the United States. This is accomplished through a series of tactical and operational exercises, along with field training, all utilizing a humanitarian assistance/ disaster relief or Non-Combatant Evacuation (NEO) scenario. In 1999, the countries of South Africa, Namibia, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, and Nigeria were selected as host countries.

Operationally, UNITAS began with the group sail of all participating United States units from Mayport, FL, on 28 July to the Puerto Rican OPAREA. There were no amphibious operations conducted in Puerto Rico due to the political issues regarding landing on Vieques Island. The loss of the Vieques Inner Range limited the training between MARFOR UNITAS and the Venezuelan Marines. CARTER HALL arrived after Phase One had begun and participated in the Free Play exercises that were conducted around the surrounding islands involving tactical maneuvers and the familiarization of ship's beginning to operate together. The free play exercises provided an excellent opportunity for Junior Officers in ship handling and reinforced both Bridge and Combat Information Center watchstander training in tactical maneuvers.

CARTER HALL steamed in formation with the other ship's in company to Cartagena, Columbia, a port call from 31 July through 4 August. CARTER HALL then sailed on to Rodman, Panama, between the 5th and 7th of August as they made their way to the west coast to begin the bulk of their amphibious training and the field training phase for the Marine Forces. Sixty-One Marines were transported over four miles up river to San Lorenzo, Ecuador, while CARTER HALL was anchored to provide a series of extensive and concentrated training evolutions to the Ecuadorian (EC) Marines in Riverine/Recon. The training was well received by the Ecuadorians and provided EC Marines with reinforcement on

their mission as coastal defense and border patrolling, conducting short operations with a planned extract such as raids and recon patrols. CARTER HALL also sent AAVs ashore in Salinas, Ecuador to train with the EC Marines. This launch was conducted from anchorage and the embarked unit of Beachmasters and their equipment remained on the Naval base beach as the AAVs traveled approximately 20 KM to the OPAREA. The AAVs landed on the beach and proceeded to their OPAREA via city streets. CARTER HALL remained anchored out during its stay in Salinas, 17-20 August, while its crew and the embarked Marine Forces enjoyed the first of many sports fairs between host and guest countries. The crew also participated in Community Relations projects to rebuild schools and provide a convent in the area with much needed sowing machines through Project Handclasp, Inc.

During their transit to Peru, 23 August, the Peruvian Naval Ships, BAP PISCO and BAP CALLAO accompanied CARTER HALL. Salinas, Peru proved to be an ideal OPAREA for the full-scale night assault, which was conducted. Prior to the assault a detachment of US NAVY SEALs complemented the participating Marine Recon unit in engineering the necessary demolition of the landing area. The AAVs landed first and exited the beach, allowing Peruvian CRRC's to land. A live-fire exercise was conducted including fire from the AAVs and illumination from Marine Forces' mortars. Following the exercise at Salinas, CARTER HALL and the accompanying Peruvian LSTs made a short transit to Huacho, Peru, for a Humanitarian Assistance Operation and amphibious demonstration. The Humanitarian side of the operation included medical and dental clinics and some community relations projects which assisted in area renovation, as well as the distribution of Project Handclasp materials for the benefit of the poorer area communities. Although the anchorage the ship was in exposed it to large swells and, at times, gusting winds, the officials ashore appreciated both the demonstration and Humanitarian assistance. While in port in Callao, Peru, CARTER HALL was local to Lima, Peru, offering its sailors and Marines their first look at a large, metropolitan, South American city.

Amphibious operations were again conducted at Puerto Aldea, Chile, 11-15 August, which proved to be a favorable beach for the operations although the restrictions due to the local fishing areas and shellfish cultivation fouled the eastern side of the OPAREA. The Chileans planned for a swept channel approach to the launch point and an underway launch for D-Day

operations. The rehearsal for the operation provided valuable practice maneuvering in the close quarters that existed. Personnel transfers between the Chilean Navy Warship, VALDEVIA, and CARTER HALL provided the opportunity for stern gate marriage with LCU 1644 and the Valdivia and AAV familiarity on the Chilean ship as well. CARTER HALL cross-decked its LST experienced crewmembers to conduct training in AAV recovery into the tank deck. While in port Concepcion and Valparaiso, Chile, CARTER HALL enjoyed both its beautiful beaches and the world-renowned skiing of the Chilean Andes.

Due to high winds and unfavorable weather conditions CARTER HALL did not go pier side in Puerto Belgrano, Argentina. Instead CARTER HALL anchored off the coast from 30 September to 3 October, and remained there for the entire in port period. Tides also made it difficult for the LCU to make a good landing at the landing site and offloads had to be closely coordinated with the tides. A large amphibious demonstration was conducted for VIP's. Argentinean helicopters provided transportation for the VIPs to the ship and once on board the Helos were used for Ship to shore movement of US and Argentinean Marines. Argentinean PanHards, their version of the AAV, and Marine AAVs participated in the assault. The Pan Hards were cross-decked using the LCU. An AAV landing was conducted to demonstrate the capabilities of an amphibious ship. The Argentinean observers were very impressed and interested in purchasing an amphibious ship.

In operations off the coast of Brazil, the exercise was conducted at Maramabia Island. The Brazilian Navy Ships, MATTOSO MAIA and ESMERELDAS participated in the operations. The area of operation was well planned to include the Marine AAVs and required a 40-minute transit with for them to reach the assault area. CARTER HALL provided vectoring to maintain the track to the beach, while coordinating their landing to be as close to high tide as possible. With the conclusion of the exercises, both vessels were joined by the Brazilian Navy Ship, ESMERELDAS, which hosted some of CARTER HALL'S sailors for a pig roast in their well deck. While in port through 23 October in Rio De Janiero, the weather may not have been what is normally associated with the region famous for its beaches. The Sailors and Marines off the CARTER HALL made the most of their visit to

the area, experiencing matches of their world famous professional soccer teams and visiting the Corcovado, the statue of Jesus Christ which overlooks and guards the city.

At this point, the other ships that CARTER HALL was in company with proceeded to Venezuela to conclude UNITAS in exercises off the coast with their Navy. For CARTER HALL and her crew, their mission now would bring them across the Atlantic to conduct the West African Training Cruise (WATC). Once reaching the waters off the coast of South Africa, CARTER HALL made a rendezvous with the South African Navy Ship, DRAKENSBURG, to conduct tactical maneuvering and training. On board, CARTER HALL prepared to launch the Marine forces for their last amphibious assault and to train with their South African counterparts in Non-combatant Evacuation and operations to provide humanitarian assistance. CARTER HALL moored in Capetown, South Africa, from 4-7 November, during which it would host the citizens of South Africa and their dignitaries, as well as the United States own VIPs abroad, and also taking time out to celebrate the birthday of the United States Marine Corps.

After leaving Capetown, CARTER HALL made a short transit north for a port of call in Walvis Bay, Namibia, 9-13 November, where its mission was to conduct both community relations and Project Handclasp projects. The ship also hosted representatives of the United States government, along with Namibia's government, tribe, and military officials. The CARTER HALL served during WATC as a base for training for a group from the United States Coast Guard to provide training on oil spill containment and abatement.

Accra, Ghana was the next port of call and business for CARTER HALL from 21-23 November, where they conducted an ambassador's reception, distributed Project Handclasp materials, participated in community relations projects. During their time in Ghana, during which CARTER HALL offered both the Ghanaian marine forces and the naval and marine forces of the Ivory Coast training. Later that training was lauded by the Ghanaian and Ivorian governments and military officials as a success, especially for the insight they were provided in how to improve on their training during Maritime Interdiction operations and ship handling while alongside. It was during the break in these operations that CARTER HALL and her crew and embarked Marine Forces enjoyed Thanksgiving while anchored in Lagune Bay.

Arriving in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, on 28 November, CARTER HALL conducted its last VIP reception, unloaded its last Project Handclasp shipment, and gave their final training in preparing to complete their work in Western Africa prior to their return to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads (NSRR). Once they completed the return trans-Atlantic voyage to Puerto Rico from 30 November to 8 December, CARTER HALL's mission became her agricultural wash-down and inspections, prior to being allowed to return to the United States. Following their nine day transit to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, the ship was in port for two and a half days to ensure each vehicle, the ship's spaces and cargo, and its personnel were cleared by the Department of Agriculture and Customs for their short transit north.

With the Department of Agriculture's approval and their cargo all loaded back onboard, the CARTER HALL began a short three day transit to Onslow Bay, North Carolina, and a short half day inport at Morehead City, NC, on 14 December. Once they arrived in Onslow Bay, the ship debarked the Marine AAVs that it had housed in its well for the past five months and pulled pierside in Morehead city to debark the Marine troops, and their equipment. After the Marines departure, the crew welcomed aboard family and friends for their "tiger" cruise to return the following day to Little Creek.

CARTER HALL returned to NAB Little Creek, VA, on the morning of 15 December, with excited family and friends waving from the pier to greet them. Upon their return, once the ship was secure and the brow was over, and the ship was being put to rest from her long journey, liberty call was sounded and her crew departed to celebrate its return and the coming holidays with family and friends.