



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45)
FPO AP 96662-1733

5441

Ser 00/262

~~AUG 29 2004~~

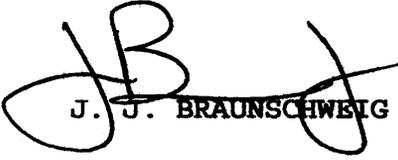
From: Commanding Officer, USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Naval Historical Center,
Washington Naval Yard, 901 M Street SE, Bldg 57, Washington,
DC, 20374-5060

Subj: 2003 Command History

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12H

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Command Structure
(3) Chronological Sequence of Events
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1. Enclosures (1) through (7) are forwarded per reference (a).


J. J. BRAUNSCHWEIG

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USS COMSTOCK COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45), UIC 21452, is the fifth Deck Landing Ship of the WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41) class and the fourth ship of the class to serve in the Pacific fleet. The mission of COMSTOCK is to embark, deploy, land, and support elements of a Marine Corps landing force in an assault by helicopters, a wide array of assault craft, and amphibious vehicles. To provide continuing support to the assault force, COMSTOCK is equipped with a modern communication suite, state-of-the-art combat systems equipment, and an expertly trained crew.

2. CDR J. J. Braunschweig commands USS COMSTOCK, which is assigned to Amphibious Group THREE and supports Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable) based in Camp Pendleton, CA.

3. USS COMSTOCK's immediate senior in command is Commander, Amphibious Squadron FIVE.

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Command Structure

Commanding Officer: CDR J. M. Padfield (through 23OCT03)
CDR J. J. Braunschweig

Executive Officer: LCDR E. Norris (through 26SEP03)
LCDR C. T. Perry

Command Master Chief: CMDCM(SW/AW) J. E. Delozier (through 05MAY03)
DCCS(SW) M. Odom (through 02SEP03)
CMDCM(SW/AW) M. M. Ford

Chief Engineer: CW2 [REDACTED] (through 09DEC03)
LT [REDACTED]

First Lieutenant: LT [REDACTED] (through 03AUG05)
BOSN [REDACTED] (through 05NOV03)
LT [REDACTED]

Operations Officer: LT [REDACTED] (through 30MAR03)
LT [REDACTED]

Supply Officer: LT [REDACTED] (through 20JUN03)
LT [REDACTED]

Medical Officer: LT [REDACTED] (through 01AUG03)
LT [REDACTED]

Dental Officer: LT [REDACTED]

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CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
<u>January</u>	
17 JAN	Surge Deployed, Underway Southern California
17 - 31 JAN	Transit to Arpa, Guam
<u>February</u>	
01 - 11 FEB	Transit to Arpa, Guam
12 - 13 FEB	Port Visit, Arpa, Guam
13 - 22 FEB	Transit to Arabian Gulf
22 FEB	Strait of Hormuz Transit
22-28 FEB	Operation Iraqi Freedom
25 FEB	Amphibious Offload of Marines to Kuwait Naval Base
<u>March</u>	
01 - 31 MAR	Maritime Environmental Response Operation (MERO)
01 - 31 MAR	Operation Iraqi Freedom
10 MAR	Port Visit, Ash Shuaybah, Kuwait
30 MAR	Port Visit, Mina Salman, Bahrain
<u>April</u>	
01 - 30 APR	Operation Iraqi Freedom
01 - 17 APR	Maritime Environmental Response Operation (MERO)
15 - 17 APR	Port Visit, Mina Salman, Bahrain
<u>May</u>	
01 - 28 MAY	Operation Iraqi Freedom
23 - 24 May	Backload Marines from Kuwait Naval Base
25 May	Strait of Hormuz Transit
25 - 31 MAY	Transit to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
<u>June</u>	
01 - 20 JUN	Transit to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
04 JUN	Crossing the Line Ceremony
09 JUN	Assisted USS Anchorage in rescue of stranded Philippine fishing vessel
20 - 26 JUN	Port Visit, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
27 - 30 JUN	Transit to San Diego, California
<u>July</u>	
02 JUL	Offload Marines at Camp Pendleton
02 - 03 JUL	Tiger Cruise
03 JUL	Return from Deployment, Inport San Diego
03 - 31 JUL	Stand Down Leave Period

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August

01 - 04 AUG Stand Down Leave Period
05 AUG Fast Cruise
06 AUG RAM Offload: Bravo Pier
07 AUG Visit Ship
13 AUG Underway, Southern California
14 AUG Inport San Diego
25 - 29 AUG INSURV

September

02 SEP Underway, Southern California
02 - 05 SEP Transit to Victoria, British Columbia
05 - 09 SEP Port Visit, Victoria, British Columbia
09 - 12 SEP Transit to San Diego, California
12 SEP Inport, San Diego
15 SEP Underway Southern California
17 - 19 SEP Seal Beach: Ammo Offload
19 SEP Inport, San Diego
22 - 23 SEP 3M Baseline Assessment
29 - 30 SEP SBTT Training (ATG)

October

01 - 31 OCT PMA
01 - 03 OCT SBTT Training (ATG)
14 - 17 OCT Command PFA
23 OCT Change of Command

November

01 - 14 NOV PMA
20 - 24 NOV CART II

December

03 - 05 DEC Initial Assessment (IA)
08 - 12 DEC TSTA Inport
13 DEC Christmas Party
15 - 31 DEC Holiday Stand down

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Command Narrative

The Sailors and Officers of USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45) started 2003 having just received the notice to deploy in a few weeks. The scheduled deployment date of July 2003 moved to January 17, 2003 in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. After some well earned time on leave with their friends and family, USS COMSTOCK and her crew departed San Diego NAVSTA on January 17th, 2003.

USS COMSTOCK deployed as a part of Amphibious Task Force West, which consisted of seven San Diego based amphibious ships taking Marines to the Northern Arabian Gulf in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. The Marines of 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance (LAR) and 1st Battalion, 11th Marines Division embarked upon COMSTOCK for the transit to the Arabian Gulf.

After a short port visit in Guam, the ships of ATF-West continued their fast paced transit to the Northern Arabian Gulf. USS COMSTOCK arrived in the 5th Fleet Area of Operation and offloaded her Marines at Kuwait Naval Base just five weeks after deploying. The Marines of 3rd LAR and 1st Battalion, 11th Marines Division weeks later began their assault toward Baghdad, Iraq.

With the Marines ashore, COMSTOCK assumed a unique role for a naval warship. The Commander Joint Forces Maritime Component Command directed COMSTOCK to serve as the "mother ship" of the Maritime Environmental Response Operation (MERO). In the event of a deliberate oil spill in the Northern Arabian Gulf, COMSTOCK would respond to contain the environmental terrorist act in coordination with other Navy, Coast Guard, and civilian forces. In Ash Shuayaba, Kuwait, COMSTOCK embarked Naval Supervisor of Salvage (NAVSUPSALV) and U. S. Coast Guard National Strike Force equipment and personnel in support of the MERO mission.

For approximately six weeks, COMSTOCK remained on station in the Northern Arabian Gulf in conjunction with USCG forces ready to respond to an intentional oil spill. Fortunately, U. S. Naval Forces secured the offshore oil platforms, and COMSTOCK did not have to carry out the MERO mission. COMSTOCK arrived in Bahrain mid-April to offload the MERO equipment and personnel. While in Bahrain, the crew of COMSTOCK enjoyed a few days of liberty in Bahrain's capital city, Manama. Following the Bahrain port visit, COMSTOCK returned to the Northern Arabian Gulf, where she remained on station with ATF-West.

Once out chopped from the Northern Arabian Gulf and in open ocean transit, both ANCHORAGE and COMSTOCK turned off their Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and used celestial navigation as their primary means of navigation.

Encl (4)