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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS GERMANTOWN (LSD-42)
FLEET POST OFFICE
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From: Commanding Officer, USS GERMANTOWN (LSD-42)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) USS GERMANTOWN (LSD 42) Command History for the Period 1 January
- 31 December 1991
(2) Ship's Photograph

1. Enclosures (1) and (2) are forwarded in accordance with reference (a).


J. D. BRAY

Copy to: (w/o encl (2))
CINCPACFLT
COMNAVSURFPAC (N-021)
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USS GERMANTOWN (LSD-42)
COMMAND HISTORY
1 JANUARY 1991 - 31 DECEMBER 1991

I. COMMAND ORGANIZATION

a. Mission - GERMANTOWN'S mission is to transport and land troops and equipment via assault landing craft and helicopters during amphibious operations against hostile shores. GERMANTOWN is the first ship in the Pacific Fleet to carry the new Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) and to deploy with an LCAC detachment. The LCAC is an attack hovercraft with the ability to deliver a 60 ton payload to hostile shores at speeds of over 40 knots. Utilizing this new craft, GERMANTOWN can carry out an amphibious raid or assault over a much wider range of beaches than previously accessible by conventional landing craft.

b. Ship's Characteristics

Length.....609 feet, 7 inches

Beam.....84 feet

Draft.....19 feet, 2 inches

Well Deck.....440 feet by 50 feet

Ship's Company.....24 Officers, 19 CPO's and 372 Enlisted

Embarked Troops...25 Officers, 13 SNCO'S and 362 Enlisted

Combat Systems.....AN/SPS-49 Air Search Radar

AN/SPS-67 Surface Search Radar

AN/SPS-64 Surface Navigation Radar

AN/SLQ-32 Electronics Countermeasures Set

MK 38 MOD Hughes 25mm Chain Gun

MK-15 MOD 12 BLOCK 1; Close-in Weapon System

Six 50 Caliber Machine Guns

NIXIE Torpedo Deception System

AN/SLQ-49 Decoy System

MK-36 MOD 6 Decoy Launching System

Ship's Characteristics (cont'd)

Propulsion.....Four Colt-Pielstick PC2.5V

16 Cylinder Diesel Engines

Two shafts with Controllable Pitch Propellers

Four 1300 KW Ship's Service Diesel Generators

Built by Lockheed Shipbuilding Company, Seattle Washington

Homeported in San Diego, California, USS GERMANTOWN is named for the historic Germantown District of Pennsylvania. Now a residential section of Philadelphia, Germantown was founded in 1683 and was the site of an important battle of the American War for Independence fought on October 4, 1777 between the forces of General George Washington and General Sir William Howe.

The name Germantown has been borne by one previous U. S. Navy ship, a sloop of war (1847-1864) which performed significant service during the war with Mexico in the home Squadron under Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry.

c. Organizational Structure - GERMANTOWN is the first LSD 41 class ship in the Pacific Fleet under the operational and administrative organization of Commander, Naval Surface Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Commander Amphibious Group Three. While in CONUS, GERMANTOWN'S immediate superior in command is Commander Amphibious Squadron Seven. the Readiness Squadron Commander for the West Coast LSD's, LST's and LKA's.

d. Units Under Operational/Administrative Control

ACU 5 Det Echo

Various USMC units of I MEF

e. Commanding Officer - Commander William J. Marshall, III graduated from Villanova University and was commissioned in the U. S. Navy via the NROTC Program in December 1972. He was stationed at NAS Bermuda (Port Royal Bay) as the Port Operations Officer while awaiting his initial sea duty.

Continuing his overseas assignment, Commander Marshall was ordered to USS SAMPSON (DDG-10), homeported in Athens Greece from 1974 to 1977. During his next assignment, he served as a Warfare Specialty Instructor at the Newport Basic Division Officer School until 1980.

Following training at Department Head School, Commander Marshall was assigned as the Weapons Officer on board USS AYLWIN (FF-1081) from 1981 to 1982, then split toured to USS MANITOWOC (LST-1180) as First Lieutenant. Reporting in June 1982, Commander Marshall participated in the initial landing of U. S. Marines in Beirut, Lebanon as part of the multi-national Peacekeeping Force, and their final extraction two years later. During this tour, Commander Marshall also participated in Operation Urgent Fury/Grenada.

Commander Marshall attended the U. S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, receiving a Masters of Arts Degree in Financial Management in 1985. From 1986 to 1987 he served as Executive Officer of USS SAGINAW (LST-1188).

Prior to receiving orders as prospective Commanding Officer of USS GERMANTOWN (LSD-42), Commander Marshall served on the staff of Commander, Naval Surface Force, Atlantic.

II CHRONOLOGY

1 Jan	Inport Subic Bay, R.P.
2 Jan - 14 Jan	Transit to Masirah Anchorage
12 Jan	Chop to CTF 150
14 Jan	Anchor at Masirah
17 Jan	Operation <u>DESERT STORM</u> commences
19 Jan - 24 Jan	LCAC assault rehearsals
27 Jan	Anchor north Masirah
4 Feb	Transit the Strait of Hormuz, entered the Arabian Gulf; first time any ship embarked four LCACs to Arabian Gulf
9 Feb	United Arab Emirates (UAE) offload for USMC field training
12 Feb	Completed UAE training, backload Marines
13 Feb	Anchored in amphibious task force anchorage
16 Feb	Start of ground combat operations; GERMANTOWN part of "deception" raid on Faylakah Island; first time Pacific and Atlantic amphibious forces acted together in actual combat operations
17 Feb	Offload embarked troops in first-ever LCAC offload in support of combat operations
19 Feb	Depart for sea echelon area
21 Feb	Backload embarked troops after conclusion of ground war; no losses or casualties
15 Mar - 28 Mar	Inport Dubai, U.A.E for maintenance availability
9 Apr - 13 Apr	Inport Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.
27 Apr - 6 May	Al Hamra exercise
15 May	Visit Boarding, Search and Seizure (VBSS) exercise
25 May - 6 Jun	Inport Dubai, U.A.E. for maint. avail.
6 Jun - 12 Jun	Inport Jebel Ali
25 Jun - 6 Jul	Inport Abu Dhabi
6 Jul	Visited By Congressman Owens (Utah) and Ambassador Walker, U.S. Ambassador to UAE
7 Jul - 12 Jul	Inport Bahrain for TAV with USS SAMUEL GOMPERS
18 Jul	Turnover with COMPHIBRON 3/15th MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT
21 Jul	Chop to COMSEVENTHFLT
27 Jul - 1 Aug	Inport Singapore
2 Aug	Crossing the line ceremony
5 Aug - 6 Aug	Inport Subic Bay
6 Aug - 27 Aug	Transit to San Diego
13 Aug	Chop to Third Fleet
27 Aug	Offload embarked troops at Camp Pendleton/Tiger Cruise
28 Aug	Homecoming/Commence leave period one

II Chronology (cont'd)

13 Sep	Commence leave period two
3 Oct - 14 Dec	PMA at Southwest Marine
14 Oct - 18 Oct	Mobile Training Team (MTT) Phase One
2 Nov - 3 Nov	Reserve Unit Training
11 Nov - 15 Nov	Supply Management Training Team (SMTT)
18 Nov - 22 Nov	3-M assist visit
4 Dec- 5 Dec	Light off assessment
10 Dec - 11 Dec	Sea trials
12 Dec	Depart yards 4 weeks early
15 Dec	Christmas party
16 Dec - 6 Jan 92	Christmas leave period

III Narrative Summary

The crew of GERMANTOWN celebrated New's Year's eve in Subic Bay with fifteen other ships, the largest battle group to be inport Subic since 1965. GERMANTOWN left San Diego, California on December 1, 1990 with the largest amphibious task force (ATF) to leave the West Coast since the Viet Nam conflict. The deployment was necessary due to rising tensions in the Middle East, where Saddam Husein's Iraqi Army had invaded and occupied the country of Kuwait. The sailors and embarked marines celebrated the night of New Year's eve and the next day GERMANTOWN and the other amphibious ships departed for the Arabian Gulf.

GERMANTOWN chopped to CTF 150 twelve days after leaving Subic Bay and arrived at the Masirah anchorage on 14 January, two days before the commencement of OPERATION DESERT STORM. The Air strikes started on 16 January while GERMANTOWN and twenty one other Navy ships waited outside the Strait of Hormuz.

Shortly after the war began, GERMANTOWN participated in mock amphibious assaults and raid rehearsals in Oman before transiting the Strait of Hormuz on 4 February and entering the Arabian Gulf. From 9-12 February, the marines embarked in GERMANTOWN conducted exercises in the United Arab Emirates while the war with Iraq raged to the north. After these exercises, GERMANTOWN anchored in Amphibious Task Force anchorage, or "Gator Gulch" to await further orders. Ground operations in Operation Desert Storm began on 16 February and the ATF was involved with a deception operation to fix Iraqi troops in position on the shores of Kuwait. This tactic was extremely successful and more than 80,000 Iraqi's were held in check while allied ground forces surrounded and captured them from land.

As allied forces liberated Kuwait, GERMANTOWN made some firsts in Naval history. It was the first time any ship embarked four LCACs to the Arabian Gulf; the first time that multi-ship multi-LCAC landings were conducted; the first time that LCACs were used in support of actual combat operations ashore; and the first time that Pacific and Atlantic amphibious forces acted together in combat operations.

GERMANTOWN LCACs moved more than 2,389 tons of vehicles and personnel from the Fifth Marine Epeditionary Brigade over a twenty-four hour period at Al Mishab, Saudi Arabia, just south of Kuwait.

After over seventy five days at sea, GERMANTOWN made her first port visit after the war at Dubai, U.A.E. The ship underwent a maintenance availability there while the crew enjoyed some well deserved liberty. It was the first time that they're sailors and marines were introduced to Arab culture, and they experienced unique shopping, dining and customs. The ship would return to Dubai from 1-13 April for another port visit.

GERMANTOWN also visited the ports of Abu Dhabi and Jebel Ali during the months of May and June. Congressman Owens (D-Utah) and Ambassador Walker (U.A.E.) payed a visit to GERMANTOWN on 6 JUL while in Abu Dhabi. Congressman Owens was on a tour through the region and addressed the crew of GERMANTOWN, thanking the men for their efforts during Operation DESERT STORM and DESERT SHIELD.

On 7 July, GERMANTOWN was inport Bahrain for a Tender availability with USS SAMUEL GOMPERS. There, the crew took advantage of the many welfare and recreation facilities. Many of the crew also had the opportunity to visit the various foreign naval units present in Bahrain.

After six months in the Arabian Gulf, GERMANTOWN turned over with COMPHIBRON 3 and 15th MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT on 18 July and chopped to COMSEVENTHFLT three days before transiting to Singapore. Inport Singapore, from 27 July to 1 August, the crew was offered the many unique liberty opportunities of an international city. They had been a long time in the Arabian Gulf, and no one missed the arduous days of Operations DESERT STORM and DESERT SHIELD. The day after leaving Singapore, GERMANTOWN crossed the equator and the time-honored tradition of "Crossing the Line" was observed. The Polywogs were dutifully transformed into full fledged Shellbacks.

GERMANTOWN pulled into Subic Bay on 5 August for a final port visit before returning to San Diego. Many of the buildings on the Naval Base had been destroyed by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, and the entire facility was covered in a layer of ash. The GERMANTOWN crew still managed to enjoy a quick two days of liberty before leaving Subic on July 6th.

The transit from Subic to California was uneventful, and the ship chopped to the Third Fleet on August 13. On August 27th, GERMANTOWN offloaded her embarked troops and assault craft at Camp Pendleton completing a nine month wartime deployment. After the offload was completed, some of the crewmembers' children were brought aboard and reunited with their fathers for an overnight Tiger Cruise.

GERMANTOWN at long last returned home on August 28. After an emotional welcome from families and friends, the crew enjoyed a full month of leave and standown before moving to Southwest Marine on October 3 and beginning a Phased Maintenance Availability.

During the yard period GERMANTOWN continued her competitive inspection cycle, completing MTT Phase One, 2B Diesel Inspection, SMTT, a 3-M assist and a Light Off Assessment before undergoing sea trials December 10th and 11th, completing her yard period over one month early and under budget.

The remainder of 1991 was spent enjoying the Holiday Season. GERMANTOWN and her crew, having met every challenge placed before them in 1991, started 1992 fresh, rested and eager to meet the challenges of the new year.