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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDING OFFICER
USS GERMANTOWN (LSD-42)
FPO AP 96666-1730

IN REPLY REFER TO:
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From: Commanding Officer, USS GERMANTOWN (LSD 42)
To: Director of Naval History

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 to 31 December 1994.
(2) Ship's Photograph

1. Enclosures (1) and (2) are submitted per reference (a).

H. W. Naeger Jr.
H. W. NAEGER JR

Copy to: (w/o encl (2))
CINCPACFLT
COMNAVSURFPAC (N-021)
COMPHIBGRU ONE
COMPHIBRON ELEVEN

USS GERMANTOWN (LSD 42)
COMMAND HISTORY
1 JANUARY - 31 DECEMBER 1994

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, with an embarked Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) detachment, is the first and only ship of the class to be permanently assigned to the United States Seventh Fleet. The LCAC is an attack hovercraft with the ability to deliver a sixty ton payload to hostile shores at speeds of over forty knots. Utilizing these state of the art craft, GERMANTOWN can carry out an amphibious raid or assault over a much wider range of beaches than is possible with older landing craft.

b. Ship's Characteristics

Length.....609 feet, 7 inches
Beam.....84 feet
Draft (Full Load).....19 feet, 2 inches
Well Deck.....440 feet by 50 feet
Ship's Company.....25 Officers
 19 CPOs
 282 Enlisted
Embarked Troops.....25 Officers
 13 NCOs
 362 Enlisted
Combat Systems.....AN/SPS-49 Air Search Radar
 AN/SPS-67 Surface Navigation Radar
 AN/SLQ-32 Electronic
 Countermeasures Set
 Two MK 38 MOD Hughes 25mm Chain
 Guns
 Two MK 15 Mod 12 Block 1, Close-in
 Weapon Systems
 Six 50 Caliber Machine Guns
 AN/SLQ-25 NIXIE Torpedo Deception
 System
 AN/SLQ-49 Decoy System
 MK 36 MOD 6 Decoy Launching System

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 at Sasebo, Japan, USS GERMANTOWN (LSD 42) 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 (1846-1864), 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 ONE. Forward Deployed as part of the Forward Deployed Naval Force (FDNF), GERMANTOWN's immediate superior in command is Commander, Amphibious Squadron ELEVEN, the commander for the BELLEAU WOOD Amphibious readiness Group.

d. Units Under Operational/Administrative Control:

- (1) Assault Craft Unit FIVE, Detachment WESTPAC Alfa
- (2) Various USMC units of the THIRTY-FIRST Marine Expeditionary Unit.

e. Commanding Officer: Commander Eric J. Baltrush, a native of [REDACTED] was born in [REDACTED] and is a graduate of San Diego State University earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology.

After his graduation, he joined the Navy via Officer Candidate School earning his commission at Newport, Rhode Island in 1977. His first tour of duty was in USS TRIPOLI (LPH 10). While serving as Electronic Warfare Officer and as a Deck Department Officer he earned his Surface Warfare designation.

Following his tour in USS TRIPOLI, he returned to Newport, Rhode Island for Department Head School, subsequently receiving orders as Operation Officer in USS DUPONT (DD 941), homeported at Norfolk Virginia.

He was next assigned as Engineer Officer in USS MANITOWOC (LST 1180), homeported at Little Creek, Virginia. While in MANITOWOC, he successfully lead the ship through the first ever diesel Operational Propulsion Plant Examination; he also saw duty during Operation URGENT FURY, the liberation of the island nation of Grenada and Lebanon Contingency Operations off the coast of Beirut, Lebanon. He then attended the Naval Post Graduate school at Monterey, California, earning a subspecialty in Transportation Management.

His next operational assignment was with the staff of Commander, Amphibious Group ONE (CTF-76) at Okinawa, Japan, where he served as primary Planner for major exercises in the Western Pacific from 1987 to 1989.

After departing the Staff, he was assigned as Executive Officer in USS FORT FISHER (LSD 40), homeported at San Diego, California.

His most recent assignment was with the staff of Surface Warfare Officers School Command, Serving as instructor for the Command Department in the area of Amphibious Warfare; instructing students enroute Executive Officer, Commanding Officer and Major Command billets.

Commander Eric Baltrush has been in command of GERMANTOWN since 21 January 1994.

II. CHRONOLOGY

1-3 Jan.....Holiday Leave and Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
4 Jan.....Underway: Ammunition Offload, Sasebo, Ja.
5-9 Jan.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
10 Jan-3 Apr.....Selected Restricted Availability: Sasebo, Ja.
21 Jan.....Change of Command
24-26 Feb.....LCAC Swap with USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45)
31 Mar-6 Apr.....Inport Sasebo, Ja.
Aeronautical Ship Installation
Representative (ASIR) Tech Assist
6-26 Apr.....USS HOLLAND (AS 32) Tender
Availability
7-8 Apr.....Underway: ISE East China Sea
8 Apr.....Ammunition Onload: Sasebo, Ja.
9-13 Apr.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
14-15 Apr.....Underway: ISE East China Sea
16-17 Apr.....Anchor: Sasebo, Ja.
18-21 Apr.....Underway: East China Sea
19 Apr.....LCAC/SSN PASSEX
22-28 Apr.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
25 Apr-6 May.....Heat Stress and Vent Survey
25-28 Apr.....Combat Systems Readiness Review
(CSRR)/Shipboard Explosive Safety
Inspection (SESI)
29 Apr-1 May.....Underway: Enroute Yokosuka, Ja.
2-22 May.....Training Availability: Yokosuka, Ja.
9-13 May.....ASIR Inspection
20 May-17 Jun.....USS JASON (AR 8) Tender Availability
25-27 May.....Underway: ISE Philippine Sea
25 May.....Tactical Communication and Navigation
(TACAN) Certification: SESEF Range,
Tokyo Wan
28 May-5 Jun.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.

6-14 Jun.....Underway: ISE Philippine Sea
 15-19 Jun.....Inport: Sasebo, Ja.
 20-22 Jun.....Underway: ISE Philippine Sea
 23-27 Jun.....Inport: Sasebo, Ja.
 28-30 Jun.....Operational Propulsion Plant
 Examination (OPPE)
 30 Jun.....Underway: OPPE
 1-4 Jul.....Inport: Sasebo, Ja.
 5-8 Jul.....Underway: Enroute White Beach,
 Okinawa, Ja.
 6-7 Jul.....Onload: White Beach, Okinawa, Ja.
 9-14 Jul.....Underway: Enroute Apra Harbor, Guam
 15-22 Jul.....Operation REMEMBRANCE (50th
 Anniversary of the liberation of
 Guam): Marianas Islands
 23-26 Jul.....Underway enroute Philippine Sea
 27-31 Jul.....Exercise VALIANT USHER 94-5
 THIRST-FIRST MEU Special Operations
 Capable (SOC) Certification
 31 Jul.....Offload: White Beach, Okinawa, Ja.
 1-2 Aug.....Underway: Enroute Sasebo, Ja.
 2-7 Aug.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
 8-12 Aug.....Pacific Fleet Board of Inspection and
 Survey (INSURV): Sasebo, Ja.
 9 Aug.....INSURV Underway Material Inspection
 (UMI): East China Sea
 13-28 Aug.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
 17 Aug.....Surface Rescue Team Trainer
 22-26 Aug.....Command Assessment of Readiness and
 Training (CART) IIB
 6-9 Sep.....CART IIA
 26-30 Sep.....Logistic Management Assessment (LMA)
 27-30 Sep.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
 1-2 Oct.....Underway: Sea Trials
 3-4 Oct.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
 5-6 Oct.....Underway: Enroute White Beach,
 Okinawa, Ja.
 7 Oct.....Inport: White Beach, Okinawa, Ja.
 8-10 Oct.....Underway: Enroute Republic of
 Philippines (RP)
 12-14 Oct.....Inport: Manila, RP
 15-16 Oct.....Underway: Enroute Leyte Gulf, RP
 17-20 OCT.....Underway: Operation REMEMBRANCE
 (Commemoration of the 50th
 Anniversary of the Battle of Leyte
 Gulf: Leyte Gulf, RP
 21-25 Oct.....Underway: Enroute Sasebo, Ja.
 26 Oct-31 Dec.....Upkeep: Sasebo, Ja.
 16-31 Dec.....USS GOMPERS (AD 37) Tender
 Availability

III. NARRATIVE SUMMARY

USS GERMANTOWN, along with the other three ships of the BELLEAU WOOD Amphibious Readiness Group started the New Year inport, Sasebo, Japan. This, the ship's second year forward deployed, included significant material and combat readiness improvements as a result of availabilities, inspections and training periods. Operation REMEMBRANCE, Blue/Green Water Workups and Exercise VALIANT USHER 94-5 exercised the Navy-Marine Corps team.

The commencement of a Selected Restricted Availability (SRA) on 10 January marked the first major evolution of 1994.

On 21 January, GERMANTOWN conducted a Change of Command Ceremony marking the relief of Commander James D. Bray by Commander Eric J. Baltrush. The ceremony was held in GERMANTOWN's well deck with a follow-on reception on the turntable. U.S. Navy and local officials were in attendance.

On 24 February, USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45) conducted a three day visit at Sasebo, Japan to exchange Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) with GERMANTOWN. Operations conducted in 1994 employed these craft (LC 52, LC 47, and LC 43) in a wide range of missions and locations around the Western Pacific.

GERMANTOWN was underway for sea trials on 31 March; April was a month of continued sea trials, watch station refamiliarization, and training for the crew. In addition, GERMANTOWN took advantage of a tender availability with USS HOLLAND (AS 32) from 6 to 26 April.

On 25 April, GERMANTOWN commenced her Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR) and Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection (SESI). The systems review and explosive inspection provided excellent training for GERMANTOWN's combat systems personnel.

On 29 April, GERMANTOWN made a three day transit to Yokosuka, Japan for a training availability. The three week availability allowed the crew to take advantage of a full range of schools not available in Sasebo.

On 23 May, GERMANTOWN steamed out of Tokyo Wan back to Sasebo. Enroute from Yokosuka, GERMANTOWN ran the Ship's External Sensor Examination Facility (SESEF) range to ensure that the Tactical Communication and Navigation (TACAN) system was operating within acceptable parameters. GERMANTOWN arrived at Sasebo for upkeep on 28 May.

In Sasebo, GERMANTOWN accomplished a number of jobs through an availability with USS JASON (AR 8). Also in June, GERMANTOWN invested significant time preparing for an upcoming Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE).

In addition to spending inport time to prepare, GERMANTOWN dedicated the underway periods of 6-14 June as well as 20 to 22 June to making final preparations. The Pacific Fleet Propulsion Examining Board Team arrived on board on 28 June and by 30 June GERMANTOWN successfully completed OPPE, maintaining currency in propulsion engineering through August 1995.

GERMANTOWN celebrated the July 4th weekend in Sasebo. On 5 July, the ship sailed to White Beach, Okinawa. Upon arrival, GERMANTOWN commenced onload of Marine Corps equipment and embarked Marines from the THIRTY-FIRST Marine Expeditionary Unit.

On 9 July, GERMANTOWN steamed towards Guam and from 12 to 14 July, participated in Blue-Green Water workups at the Guam operating area. During the workups, GERMANTOWN conducted LCAC operations in support of embarked Marines. From 15 to 22 July, GERMANTOWN underwent an upkeep period at Guam. During this period, numerous GERMANTOWN sailors and Marines participated in ceremonies in support of Operation REMEMBRANCE. Throughout the operation, the ship was instrumental in providing volunteers to participate in the myriad of activities paying tribute to veterans of the hard fought battles to liberate Guam from Japanese occupation during World War II.

After completing duties at Guam, GERMANTOWN steamed back towards Okinawa and participated in Exercise VALIANT USHER 94-4 and successfully completed the Marine Expeditionary Unit Special Operations Capable (MEU(SOC)) Certification. Upon completion of the exercise, GERMANTOWN off loaded the amphibious cargo and sailed for Sasebo on 1 August.

From 2 August to 1 October, GERMANTOWN was inport at Sasebo upgrading material readiness and cycling through inspections. The first inspection was the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) from 8 to 12 August, with 9 August being GERMANTOWN's Underway Material Inspection (UMI). During the UMI, GERMANTOWN's communications suite was given a comprehensive assessment and judged to be and in excellent condition. Furthermore, successful Detect-to Engage (DTE) evolutions were conducted. After much hard work and a full range of material checks GERMANTOWN was found fit for further service by INSURV inspectors.

From 22 to 26 August, GERMANTOWN's logistics and supply procedures, training programs, and maintenance performance was evaluated during Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) IIB.

From 29 August to 26 September, GERMANTOWN made a wide range of repairs and adjustments, particularly within the engineering spaces during Planned Restricted Availability (PRAV).

From 6 to 9 September, GERMANTOWN was once again evaluated for shipboard training programs during CART IIA.

From 26 to 30 September, GERMANTOWN underwent a very successful Logistics management Assessment (LMA). During LMA, GERMANTOWN's Supply Department exceeded requirements in all categories and qualified to compete for the Best Ship's Store Sales and Services Award.

From 1 to 2 October GERMANTOWN got underway for sea trials to test engine repairs after the recent PRAV period. From 3 to 4 October, the ship spent time in Sasebo prior to getting underway on 5 October enroute to White Beach, Okinawa. Arriving at Okinawa on 7 October, GERMANTOWN embarked Marines and steamed towards Manila, Republic of Philippines on 9 October. Due to a typhoon heading towards the Philippines, GERMANTOWN was delayed in her arrival at Manila. Inport at Manila on 12 October, GERMANTOWN sailors and Marines enjoyed two days of working port liberty at Manila prior to getting underway enroute Leyte Gulf for Operation REMEMBRANCE. At Leyte Gulf, GERMANTOWN anchored and conducted LCAC operations for offload of Marine Corps cargo and to demonstrate for visitors the modern capabilities of the U.S. Navy in an amphibious warfare environment. During these landings, GERMANTOWN's LCAC were the major players in the commemorative landing.

On 21 October, recurring problems with GERMANTOWN's main propulsion diesel engines required GERMANTOWN to return to Sasebo. She arrived on 26 October for repairs.

From 26 October through 31 December, GERMANTOWN was inport Sasebo completing much needed repairs to the main engines. From 16 December, GERMANTOWN took advantage of another tender availability with USS SAMUEL GOMPERS, who completed over 800 jobs.

1994 proved to be a challenging and demanding year for GERMANTOWN. During the course of the year, the ship steamed a total of 13,381 miles safely and incident free. GERMANTOWN welcomes upcoming opportunities in 1995!