



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

Rec'd 4/16/96

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750
Ser LSD42/097
1 Mar 96

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 1995
(2) Ship's Photograph

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

S. C. Rowland

S. C. ROWLAND

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

USS GERMANTOWN (LSD 42)
COMMAND HISTORY
1 January - 31 December 1995

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, was the first ship of her class to be permanently assigned to the United States Seventh Fleet. The LCAC is an assault hovercraft with the ability to deliver a sixty ton payload to hostile shores at speeds of over forty 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

Built by Lockheed Shipbuilding Company, Seattle, Washington

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
 272 Enlisted
Embarked Troops.....34 Officers
 20 NCOs
 450 Enlisted
Combat Systems.....AN/SPS-49 Air Search Radar
 AN/SPS-67 Surface Navigation Radar
 SLQ-32 Electronics Countermeasures Set
 Two MK 38 MOD Hughes 25mm Chain
 Two MK 15 MOD 12 Block 1, Close-in Weapon Systems
 Six 50-Caliber Machine Guns
 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

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 Overseas Family Residency Program (OFRP), GERMANTOWN's immediate superior in command is Commander, Amphibious Squadron ELEVEN, the commander for the BELLEAU WOOD Amphibious Ready Group.

d. Units Under Operational/Administrative Control:

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

e. Commanding Officer: Commander Steven C. Rowland graduated from the University of Rochester and was commissioned an Ensign through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) program in May 1978.

He was assigned temporarily to USS PORTLAND (LSD 37) for two months prior to attending Surface Warfare Officers School (Basic) and Communications School in Newport, Rhode Island. From January 1979 to January 1982, Commander Rowland served as the Communications Officer and Damage Control Assistant in USS HERMITAGE (LSD 34).

Commander Rowland attended the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School from March 1982 through March 1984 and was awarded an M.S. in Operations Research. He then attended Surface Warfare Officers School (Department Head) followed by pipeline combat systems training at Dam Neck, Virginia. Commander Rowland served as Combat Systems Officer in USS BOONE (FFG 28) from January 1985 until October 1986 and then as First Lieutenant in USS PORTLAND (LSD 37) from November 1986 to May 1988.

Following his department head tours, Commander Rowland was assigned as an instructor in the Mathematics Department of the U.S. Naval Academy from June 1988 to January 1991. Returning to sea duty, he served as Executive Officer in USS SHREVEPORT (LPD 12) from April 1991 to June 1992.

Reporting to Washington, D.C., he was assigned as an operations research analyst in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Program Analysis and Evaluation) from June 1992 until May 1994.

Commander Rowland's awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal (three awards), Navy Achievement Medal (two awards), Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and Navy Unit Commendation.

II. CHRONOLOGY

01-08 JAN.....Inport Sasebo, Japan
04-07 JAN.....Light-Off Assessment
09-11 JAN.....Dock Trials/Fast Cruise
10 JAN.....CDR Naeger Assumes Command
12-17 JAN.....Sea Trials
18-20 JAN.....Inport Sasebo
21-25 JAN.....U/W for Valiant Usher 95-1
26-27 JAN.....En route Okinawa
28-31 JAN.....Amphibious Training Okinawa Area
01-03 FEB.....En route Sasebo
03-17 FEB.....Inport Sasebo
18 FEB.....Family Appreciation Cruise
19 FEB-07 MAR.....Inport Sasebo
21 FEB.....Pre-Training Readiness Inspection
03 MAR.....CDR Rowland Assumes Command
07-08 MAR.....En route Okinawa, Japan
09-10 MAR.....Inport Okinawa
11-12 MAR.....En route Iwo Jima
13-15 MAR.....Iwo Jima WW II Commemorative
16-18 MAR.....En route Okinawa
19 MAR.....Inport Okinawa
20-25 MAR.....Amphibious Training Okinawa
26 MAR-29 MAR.....Inport Okinawa
28 MAR-07 APR.....Tailored Ship's Training Availability IV
08-09 APR.....Blue/Green Water Work-Ups
10-19 APR.....COMPTUEX/SOCEX Okinawa Area
20 APR.....Inport Okinawa
21-23 APR.....Tailored Ship's Training Availability I
 En route Hong Kong
24-27 APR.....Inport Hong Kong
28 APR-03 MAY.....En route Surabaya, Indonesia
04-11 MAY.....Upkeep Surabaya ID
12-17 MAY.....En route Thailand
17-24 MAY.....Cobra Gold 95

25-31 MAY.....En route Okinawa
Tailored Ship's Training Availability II

01-03 JUN.....Inport Okinawa

04 JUN.....Amphibious Group One Family Day Cruise

05 JUN.....En route Sasebo

06-18 JUN.....Upkeep Sasebo

19-20 JUN.....En route Okinawa
Tiger Cruise

21-24 JUN.....Okinawa WW II Commemorative

24-25 JUN.....En route Sasebo

26-29 JUN.....Inport Sasebo

30 JUN.....En route Pohang, Korea

01-04 JUL.....Inport Pohang

05-12 JUL.....Exercise Freedom Banner 95

13 JUL.....En route Sasebo

14-20 JUL.....Inport Sasebo

21 JUL.....En route Okinawa

22 JUL.....Inport Okinawa

22-31 JUL.....En route Townsville, Australia

01-04 AUG.....Inport Townsville

05-26 AUG.....Exercise Kangaroo 95

25-26 AUG.....Inport Townsville

27 AUG.....En route Cairns Harbour, Australia

28 AUG-01 SEP.....Inport Cairns Harbour

02-11 SEP.....En route Okinawa

11 SEP.....Offload Okinawa

12-13 SEP.....En route Sasebo

14 SEP-15 OCT.....Upkeep Sasebo

18-21 SEP.....Ammunition Off-Load
Defuel

16 OCT-31 DEC.....Dry docking Selected Restricted
Availability Sasebo

III. NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The crew of GERMANTOWN will remember 1995 as the year the ship brought its standards to an unprecedented high point and demonstrated its combat readiness through a demanding schedule filled with repair and training availabilities, inspections, exercises, port visits and World War II commemoratives.

The New Year found USS GERMANTOWN inport, Sasebo, Japan, completing repairs to the main engines and preparing for the 4 January Light-Off Assessment. On 9 January, Commander Henri Naeger relieved Commander Eric Baltrush and assumed command of GERMANTOWN. GERMANTOWN was anxious to return to sea and conducted sea trials from 12 - 17 January. The ship then departed Sasebo for exercise VALIANT USHER 95-1, which consisted of LCAC operational tests over mud flats off the Republic of South Korea. Upon the successful completion of VALIANT USHER, GERMANTOWN steamed to the Okinawa operations area for

amphibious training, focusing on Landing Craft Utility (LCU) handling in the well deck.

After the Amphibious Training, GERMANTOWN returned to Sasebo on 3 February to prepare the ship for the upcoming Change of Command ceremony and "six month deployment." Making GERMANTOWN ship shape and ready to deploy included the verification of equipment and personnel records, which culminated on 21 February with the Pre-Training Readiness Inspection. February was also a time for the crew to show off GERMANTOWN for family members and the local community. On 18 February, the ship conducted a Family Appreciation Cruise, highlighted by an LCAC fly-by and visits from several local community leaders.

The Change of Command ceremony was the last milestone before deployment and was executed flawlessly. Commander Steven C. Rowland assumed command on 3 March and began the final preparations to get underway.

GERMANTOWN's first stop was Okinawa to pick up Marines before steaming in company with USS SAN BERNARDINO (LST 1186) and USS DUBUQUE (LPH 8) for the 50th Annual World War II Commemorative of the Battle of Iwo Jima. The ship's participation in the commemorative gave the crew and embarked Marines a glimpse into Japanese and American history. During the backload it became apparent that SAN BERNARDINO would not be able to beach because of high cross-beach winds and current. To compensate, GERMANTOWN back-loaded, via LCAC, over 200 Marine vehicles in two days.

GERMANTOWN returned to Okinawa on 18 March to off-load Marines and begin a month and a half of amphibious training and exercises within the Okinawa operations area, including Tailored Ship's Training Availabilities I and IV and the Marine Corps Special Operations Capable certification exercise. During this period, the ship completed numerous evolutions including Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV), LCAC, LCU, and flight operations.

The crew arrived in Hong Kong tired but eager for liberty before heading south for Surabaya, Indonesia on 28 April. In Surabaya, GERMANTOWN completed a work package which included significant work to the engineering plant and topside preservation. On 12 May, GERMANTOWN steamed north to the Gulf of Thailand to participate in COBRA GOLD 95. The largest multi-national exercise of its kind in the Pacific during 1995, COBRA GOLD provided an excellent training opportunity. Although GERMANTOWN is forward deployed and accustomed to operating with a variety of units, the complications that arise when complex planning is put into action proved to be eye-opening to the junior personnel and challenging to the experienced.

Upon completion of COBRA GOLD, GERMANTOWN conducted Tailored Ship's Training Availability II while en route to Okinawa. The ship

successfully completed TSTA II and arrived in Okinawa on 31 May to off-load Marines and prepare for the upcoming Amphibious Group One Friendship Cruise which turned out to be a huge success. On 5 June, GERMANTOWN returned to Sasebo for a short upkeep period.

GERMANTOWN returned to sea, en route Okinawa with embarked Tigers to participate in The Battle of Okinawa 50th Annual World War II Commemorative. Following the successful completion of ceremonies, the ship returned to Sasebo for a port visit before sailing to Pohang, Korea for exercise FREEDOM BANNER. During FREEDOM BANNER, GERMANTOWN successfully functioned as the air platform for three HM-15 MH-53 helicopters. This was the first time Air Mine Countermeasure operations were conducted from an LSD 41 Class ship. The ship was lauded by COMCMRON ONE for the safe conduct of 72 hours of flight ops and providing over 32,000 gallons of JP-5 during the operations. On 13 October, GERMANTOWN returned to Sasebo for a week of rest and preparation for the upcoming jaunt back across the equator to Australia.

After again embarking Marines in Okinawa and transiting across the equator and through the Louisiade Archipelago, GERMANTOWN arrived in Townsville, Australia to begin KANGAROO-95. During KANGAROO, the ship berthed and subsisted 300 soldiers of the 2nd Royal Australian Regiment and 166 USMC personnel. The ship successfully performed all LCAC operations, including an amphibious assault. Additionally, GERMANTOWN hosted USCINCPAC, J-5 USCINCPAC, the Australian Minister of Defense and the Australian Chief of Defense for a tour and an LCAC demonstration. The ship was also praised by the Australian Fleet Navigator for its professionalism and accuracy in navigating more than 6500 nautical miles in Australian waters, including the transit of the Inner Great Barrier Reef. Upon completion of KANGAROO, the ship stopped at Cairns, Australia for a port call before sailing north to Okinawa and Sasebo. GERMANTOWN arrived in Sasebo on 13 September.

Upon arrival in Sasebo, GERMANTOWN commenced an extensive Dry docking Selected Restricted Availability that would last to the end of the year. On 15 October, the crew moved to a berthing barge due to the lack of messing and head facilities aboard GERMANTOWN during the dry dock period. The ship entered the dry dock at SSK shipyard in Sasebo on 16 October. During the remainder of 1995, the crew commenced and completed industrial level projects to improve the material condition of the ship. In December, for the first time in the ship's history, GERMANTOWN was organized into six cold-iron inport duty sections. Special meals were served aboard for Thanksgiving and Christmas. The ship's annual children's and adult Christmas Parties were held on 16 and 19 December, respectively.

GERMANTOWN looks forward to an equally impressive 1996!