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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD 44)
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From: Commanding Officer, USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD-44)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: 1993 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD-44)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology for 1993
(3) Narrative
(4) Admiralty ltr report dtd 2 April 1993
(5) GUNSTON HALL 212000Z May 93
(6) GUNSTON HALL 291750Z May 93
(7) List of Chicago Area Business Leaders Visitors
(8) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
(9) 1-93 Mediterranean Cruise Book

1. Per reference (a), enclosures 1 through 9 are submitted.

M. P. Nowakowski
M. P. NOWAKOWSKI

1. COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD-44) is the fourth ship of the Whidbey Island class Landing Ship Dock Amphibious ships. The ship's mission is to provide functional support in three areas; amphibious warfare, mobility, and command and control. This mission is accomplished through the transportation of elements of a landing force, landing craft, and support equipment to an amphibious objective area and to launch preloaded assault craft in support of an amphibious assault operation.

2. USS GUNSTON HALL is permanently assigned to Commander, Amphibious Squadron TEN who is under Commander, Amphibious Group TWO. The ship's type commander is Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic Fleet. From January 1 to April 17, 1993, GUNSTON HALL was assigned to Commander, Amphibious Squadron FOUR under Commander Sixth Fleet while deployed to Mediterranean Sea with Marine Amphibious Readiness Group 1-93. While deployed to the Mediterranean Sea, GUNSTON HALL had elements of Assault Craft Unit FOUR, Special Boat Unit TWENTY, and Marine Expeditionary Unit 22 attached.

3. Commander Michael P. Nowakowski, USN, was Commanding Officer of USS GUNSTON HALL throughout 1993. Commander Nowakowski was born in [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]. Following graduation from Ohio University in 1974, he was commissioned an Ensign in the United States Naval Reserve. After attending various service schools, he was assigned as Communications Officer and Assistant First Lieutenant in USS BARNSTABLE COUNTY (LST-1197) in June 1975.

Upon completion of his initial sea tour, he served as Missile Battery Officer in USS BIDDLE (CG-34) in April 1978. In July 1979, he assumed duties as Assistant Professor of Naval Science at the Naval Reserve College, located at Fort Schuyler.

Upon completion of advanced Surface Warfare Officers School in February 1982, he reported to USS PHARRIS (FF-1094) as Engineering Officer, followed in October 1983 as Material Officer on the staff of Commander, Destroyer Squadron TEN. In April 1985, he reported to Surface Warfare Officers School Command, Newport, Rhode Island, and served as an instructor in the Department Head Steam Engineering Department.

His next assignment, in December 1986, was Flag Secretary to Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group EIGHT. Following this tour in April 1988, he served as Executive Officer in USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41). In November 1989, Commander Nowakowski was assigned as Financial Management Officer for the Navy's Research and Development account in the Office of Navy Comptroller, Washington, D. C.

After completing Prospective Commanding Officer training in Surface Warfare Officers School Command in Newport, Rhode Island, Commander Nowakowski relieved as Commanding Officer in USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD-44) in July 1992.

Enclosure (1)

2. CHRONOLOGY FOR 1993

FIRST QUARTER

1. JANUARY - The month of January began with the ship in the Mediterranean Sea enroute from a Christmas 1992 port visit at Valencia, Spain to Haifa, Israel to participate in exercise Noble Shirley 1993 with Marine Amphibious Readiness Group 1-93. The group, which included USS GUAM (LPH-9), USS AUSTIN (LPD-4), USS SUMTER (LST-1181), and USS LA MOURE COUNTY (LST-1194), was under command of Commander, Amphibious Squadron FOUR (Commander Task Force 61) embarked on USS GUAM. On 6 January, the ship participated in a true first for Amphibious Operations when a simultaneous Landing Craft Air Cushion assault was launched using two separate platforms and GUNSTON HALL's LCAC's. The ship entered the port of Haifa on 9 January, delayed two days due to extremely adverse weather conditions, to conduct an availability with the Haifa shipyard. After a successful two week yard period, the ship departed Haifa on 22 January enroute to Athens, Greece, arriving on 25 January, for a three day port visit. On 29 January the ship departed Athens in order to operate for an indefinite period of time in the Adriatic Sea in support of Operation Provide Promise.

2. FEBRUARY - February began with the ship in the Adriatic Sea enroute to Trieste, Italy for a port visit. GUNSTON HALL arrived in Trieste on 4 February and remained there until 8 February. On 8 February the ship departed Trieste to operate off the coast of the former Yugoslavia in support of Operation Provide Promise. For the next two weeks, until 22 February, GUNSTON HALL remained in the Adriatic Sea transiting between an anchorage in the Gulf of Manfredonia off the coast of Italy and a designated operating "box" off the coast of the former Yugoslavia. On 18 February, GUNSTON HALL had a rendezvous with the USS RECOVERY to embark members of the Engineering Training Group for a mid-cycle engineering training assessment. The ship arrived in Venice, Italy on 22 February for a three day port visit. On 25 February, the ship left Venice enroute, again, to the Adriatic Sea and Provide Promise operations, remaining there for the remainder of the month.

3. MARCH - In summary, from 1-18 March GUNSTON HALL, under tactical control of CTF 61, was in the Adriatic Sea transiting from the assigned anchorage in the Gulf of Manfredonia to its operating area off the coast of the former Yugoslavia. On 6 March, an underway replenishment with the USNS JOSHUA HUMPHREYS (T-AO 188) was conducted; GUNSTON HALL received F-76 and F-44. Then again, on 13 March, an underway replenishment with the USS KALAMAZOO (AOR-6) was completed. Concurrently, the ship received food and stores via vertical replenishment from KALAMAZOO. On 14 March, USS AUSTIN assumed tactical control of GUNSTON HALL as GUAM departed the region enroute to Naples, Italy. The ship anchored on 5 separate occasions in the Gulf of Manfredonia during this period - using much of the time for various training evolutions, which included numerous General Quarters drills and small arms familiarization training. On 18 March, the ship replenished fuel at sea again with KALAMAZOO and detached the same day from AUSTIN

enroute to the Mediterranean Sea for exercise Betacom 1993 with the Spanish military off the coast of Almeria, Spain. GUNSTON HALL steamed with and had tactical control of the USS SUMTER and USS LA MOURE COUNTY. On 22 March, the ship exercised at General Quarters and conducted a Close-In Weapons System Pre-Aim Calibration fire and Detect to Engage sequence. The ship anchored in the Gulf of Almeria on 24 March in preparation for the exercise amphibious assault the next day. On 25 March, AUSTIN entered the area, assumed tactical control of GUNSTON HALL, SUMTER, and LA MOURE COUNTY, and directed the Betacom exercise. After completion of the off-load, GUNSTON HALL entered the port of Almeria - colliding with the tugboat Sertosa-5 in the harbor. (Admiralty claim - enclosure 4). The ship moored to pier 2 and remained in Almeria until 30 March. Enroute to Rota, Spain on 30 March, GUNSTON HALL once again assumed tactical control of SUMTER and LA MOURE COUNTY. The next day, 31 March, the ship entered the port of Rota and moored to pier 3 to commence a turnover with Marine Amphibious Readiness Group 2-93 and conduct a fresh water washdown of all Marine rolling stock.

SECOND QUARTER

4. APRIL - From 1-3 April the ship remained in Rota, Spain and was officially relieved by MARG 2-93 on 1 April. That same day, GUNSTON HALL chopped to the operational control of Commander Task Group 22.2 embarked in GUAM. Underway on 3 April, the ship was enroute to Morehead City, North Carolina to offload the embarked Marine elements with which it deployed. From 3-15 April the transit across the Atlantic Ocean was utilized for numerous training evolutions; Man overboard, General Quarters, Leap Frogs, Basic Engineering Casualty Control Exercises, CIWS PAC fires, and DIVTACS were all exercised. On 15 April the ship anchored in Onslow Bay, North Carolina and started the Marine off-load the next day, 16 April, via LCAC. On the 16th, when it became evident that the sea state and weather would not allow for a safe LCAC off-load, the ship moored to berth 9, port of Morehead City, to complete the off-load. That night, the ship brought on family and friends of crew members for the overnight transit from Morehead City to Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, Norfolk, Virginia, GUNSTON HALL's homeport. In the morning of 17 April, after off-loading the ACU-4 and SBU-20 embarked elements while underway, the ship moored to the Quaywall "Dogleg" at Little Creek - officially ending a Mediterranean deployment which had begun for GUNSTON HALL on October 20, 1992. From 17-31 April the ship was in a post-deployment standown. During that period, on 26 April, Commander Amphibious Squadron TEN broke his pennant on board GUNSTON HALL.

5. MAY - GUNSTON HALL began May in the middle of its standown and remained at Little Creek until 7 May. That day, the ship got underway enroute to Naval Station, Norfolk and moored to Pier 7, Berth 2 in order to host members of the United States Senate Armed Services Committee who were in Norfolk conducting hearings on the issue of homosexuals in the military. The Senators, Robb, D-VA, and Kempthorn, R-Iowa arriving on 10 May. Escorted by the Commanding Officer, they toured the ship's sanitary and living spaces, interviewed crewmembers, and answered the crew's questions

concerning the issue at hand. Later that day, after the visitors departed, the ship returned to Little Creek and the Quaywall "Dogleg" - running the Naval Station degaussing range enroute to Little Creek on 12 May, GUNSTON HALL was visited by 25 foreign journalists. Then on 19 May, the ship shifted berths to Quaywall West to offload ammunition and back to Quaywall East, when completed, in preparation for a Docking Phased Maintenance Availability. On 21 May, the ship spilled approximately 1-2 gallons of F-76 into the Little Creek harbor while defueling. (enclosure 5) On 24 May, the ship departed Little Creek enroute to Metro Machine Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia for its scheduled fiscal year 1993 DPMA. Then on 29 May, while moored to the Finger pier at Metro, GUNSTON HALL accidentally discharged approximately 3 gallons of oily waste from a vent on the starboard side of the ship onto the pier. The ship spent the remainder of the month at the finger pier, Metro Machine Shipyard. (enclosure 6)

6. JUNE - GUNSTON HALL remained at the finger pier until 8 June when it moved into the Drydock at Metro Machine. It was the first time the ship had been drydocked since commissioning. The ship remained in the drydock for the rest of the month while continuing the shipyard availability.

THIRD QUARTER

7. JULY - The month of July, in its entirety, was spent in the Drydock. On 5 July, minor flooding was reported in the well-deck; the flooding was a result of an open valve and no major damage or injuries resulted.

8. AUGUST - From 1-27 August, GUNSTON HALL was in the drydock. Then, on 27 August, the ship departed the drydock and moored to the finger pier where the ship remained until 30 August. On 30 August, the ship left the finger pier enroute to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Norfolk, Virginia. It was a "dead stick" move as the ship was seeking safe haven from Hurricane Emily. The ship stayed there the rest of the month.

9. SEPTEMBER - 1 September started with the ship at hurricane condition one moored at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. Later that same day, Hurricane Emily passed through the area and GUNSTON HALL "dead-sticked" back to the finger pier at Metro Machine shipyard. The ship stayed at that pier until 14 September when it got underway from Metro enroute to the Virginia Capes Operating Area - thus officially ending the Docking Phased Maintenance Availability. Throughout the 14 and 15th, the ship exercised at General Quarters and anchored at Lynnhaven Anchorage LA-7 before entering port at Little Creek, mooring to the Quaywall "Dogleg", on 15 September. Remaining there until 20 September, the ship got underway again and spent the next three days going from Lynnhaven Anchorage to the Virginia Capes Operating area and conducting wet well (Landing Craft Unit) and LCAC operations. On 23 September, GUNSTON HALL returned to Little Creek, mooring to Quaywall West in order to conduct an ammunition on-load. After the on-load was complete, later on the 23rd, the ship shifted berths to Quaywall

East. On 25 September, GUNSTON HALL was visited by a group of Chicago area visitors escorted by RADM L. F. Picotte, Commander, Amphibious Group TWO. (visitors listed in enclosure 7) The ship remained at the Quaywall East for the remainder of September.

FOURTH QUARTER

10. OCTOBER - From 1-23 October GUNSTON HALL remained in port at Little Creek; the ship underwent a command inspection by Commander, Amphibious Squadron TEN on 20 October. On 23 October the ship got underway and proceeded to Lynnhaven anchorage LA-7 - remaining there until the 24th, conducting LCU wet well and sterngate marriage operations. Re-entering port on 24 October, the ship embarked members of the Engineering Training Group and got underway again on 25 October for three days in the Virginia Capes Operating area. Throughout the training days the ship conducted numerous Man overboard, General Quarters, and BECCE drills. Anchoring in Lynnhaven LA-7 on 27 October, the ship disembarked the Engineering Training Group personnel and embarked members of the Fleet Training Group detachment, Little Creek, Virginia. GUNSTON HALL, with an FTG detachment embarked, got underway on 28 October enroute to Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for Refresher Training. On 30 October the ship transited the Crooked Island passage and entered the Caribbean Sea - arriving in the Guantanamo Bay operating area on 31 October.

11. NOVEMBER - On 1 November GUNSTON HALL moored to Wharf "Bravo", Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and remained there until 4 November. Over those three days, the ship conducted various in-port fire party training, damage control repair locker training, and damage control training team training. GUNSTON HALL got underway on 4 November - practicing a low visibility exercise, swept channel piloting, piloting by gyro, and loss of gyro navigation drills while exiting port. For the next 36 hours, GUNSTON HALL exercised at General Quarters, conducted BECCE's, and conducted wet well operations before anchoring on 5 November in Guantanamo Bay anchorage "Delta". That day, at anchor for approximately 1 hour, the ship repeated all of the aforementioned navigation drills before conducting a multiple battle hit General Quarters drill. On the evening of 5 November, the ship moored to pier "Victor" and remained there until 9 November conducting various in-port damage control training. Underway on 9 November, GUNSTON HALL executed a mock highline chair transfer while alongside USS KIDD (DDG-993), anchored in the Guantanamo Bay at anchorage "Charlie" overnight, and on 10 November exercised at General Quarters again before mooring to pier "Victor" that evening. Moored until 12 November, the ship conducted additional in-port fire party training. 12 November was a busy day for GUNSTON HALL as the ship conducted a boat recovery man overboard drill, flight operations, and an underway replenishment with USS MERRIMACK (AO-179), taking fuel oil, and tying up to Wharf "Bravo" that evening. 12-15 November were spent in-port as the ship took on more fuel, conducted in-port emergency fire party training, and General Quarters drills. During the period from 15-18 November, the ship got underway, anchored in the Guantanamo Bay three times,

repeated all of the previously mentioned navigation drills twice, exercised four times at General Quarters, launched exercise Super Rapid Blooming Offboard Chaff, moored to buoy "Alpha" in Guantanamo Bay, conducted two man overboard drills, practiced an at sea Rescue and Assistance drill, and completed a tow and be towed exercise with the tugboat EVELYN KAY. On 18 November, GUNSTON HALL embarked elements of the Marine Corps who were in the Caribbean region operating in support of contingency operations ongoing in Haiti for the transit back to the continental United States, and departed the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba operating area. The ship, which was originally scheduled for a port visit to Nassau, Bahamas was re-directed and moored to Main Wharf, Freeport, Bahamas on 20 November for a two day port visit. Departing the Bahamas on 22 November, the ship was transited to Morehead City, North Carolina to disembark the Marines - arriving there the next day, 23 November. After mooring to Pier 9 for approximately two hours, GUNSTON HALL got underway again to transit to Little Creek, Virginia. The ship arrived at Little Creek on 24 November, pier 15 North, and remained there until 29 November. On 29 November, GUNSTON HALL got underway and, after a brief anchorage in Lynnhaven anchorage LA-7 operated in the Virginia Capes area in support of LCU wet well and LCAC operations. The ship remained in the Capes until the end of the month.

12. DECEMBER - Still underway in the Virginia Capes on 1-2 December, GUNSTON HALL conducted sound trials, anchor maintenance, Gunnery exercises, Engineering training, and LCAC operations before mooring to pier 15 North on 2 December. On 6 December, Commander, Amphibious Squadron SIX broke his pennant on board GUNSTON HALL. The ship remained at Little Creek for the remainder of the year - beginning a Christmas leave and standown period on 17 December and continuing through 31 December.

3. NARRATIVE

FIRST QUARTER

During this period, GUNSTON HALL participated in two major Amphibious exercises, operated in support of OPERATION PROVIDE PROMISE in the Adriatic Sea, visited six Mediterranean ports of call, and underwent a minor shipyard availability in Haifa, Israel. The emphasis throughout was operational, amphibious training - and GUNSTON HALL proved to be thoroughly successful. It was during this time that GUNSTON HALL truly became a seasoned crew. In fact, many things were going rather well for the ship - GUNSTON HALL learned in February that it had won its second consecutive type commander's Battle "E" ribbon (the ship has won the award for every competitive cycle it has been eligible for) as well as the type commander's Safety award.

The exercises gave the ship the opportunity to prove its collective amphibious expertise; they kept the crew focused and fostered high morale. Though GUNSTON HALL's involvement with OPERATION PROVIDE PROMISE was minimal, the crew, knowing their presence was felt, maintained an exceptional level of amphibious readiness. Also during this time, the ship was beginning to adjust to the forthcoming return to the continental United States after an extended, six month deployment.

SECOND QUARTER

This quarter saw one of the biggest shifts in emphasis GUNSTON HALL underwent throughout the year. From the highest state of readiness a ship can get to (deployed) to preparing for a major four month shipyard availability, GUNSTON HALL became a ship in transition during this period. Arriving home in April, and entering the yard in May, the crew was forced to adjust quickly. The daily routine of the shipyard impacted GUNSTON HALL and it was a difficult time for the crew. Concurrently, a tremendous crew turnover was ongoing with many new people replacing the veterans who had carried GUNSTON HALL through the deployment. With the turnover much experience was lost.

The primary emphasis was to maximize the opportunity to repair the ship - and ensure GUNSTON HALL would leave the yard on time in September.

THIRD QUARTER

The emphasis on repair continued through almost all of this quarter. Perhaps the start of this quarter, July and early August, was the most difficult time for the ship throughout the whole year; GUNSTON HALL was mired in the middle of its yard period. Once late August arrived, when the ship exited the drydock and evaded a hurricane, things began moving rather quickly again. The entire ship was ready to become operational again - to escape the doldrums of the extended availability. Finally, in September, GUNSTON HALL became operational and got underway for the Virginia Capes

time had taken their toll on the crew of GUNSTON HALL; the training to come in the Fourth quarter would be most valuable. Nonetheless, the ship left the yard period on time and with significant improvements in material condition. It was a successful DPMA.

FOURTH QUARTER

The greatest transition of the year occurred for GUNSTON HALL during the fourth quarter. Out of the shipyard for barely thirty days, the ship prepared for the most intense training available - Refresher training at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Those three weeks spent in GTMO characterized this entire quarter. The crew worked hard in Guantanamo Bay - and the work paid off handsomely as crew readiness increased exponentially. The year ended with the ship in homeport, in a Christmas standown, 1994.