

15MAY04

To: Director, Naval Historical Center  
From: USS HARPERS FERRY (LSD 49)

Subject: 2003-2004 Command History

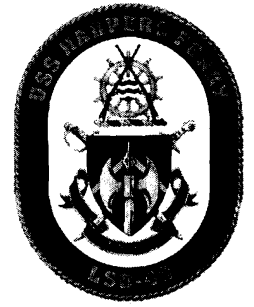
Sir,

Enclosed in an accurate and complete command history for USS HARPERS FERRY (LSD 49) from April 2003 to March 2004.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'M' and 'U' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

ENS [REDACTED]  
Harpers Ferry PAO



**COMMANDER, USS HARPERS FERRY (LSD-49)**

## **Command History**

### **I. Command Composition and Organization:**

- *Commanding Officer:* Commander Humberto L. Quintanilla II
- *Executive Officer:* Lieutenant Commander John P. Sanford
- *Command Master Chief:* CMDCM (SW) Robert L. Palmer
  
- UIC: 21852

HARPERS FERRY is assigned Forward Deployed Naval Forces. The new compliment consists of a total of 30 officers and 278 enlisted personnel, with the ability to embark approximately 500 Marines.

1. ***HOMEPORT: Sasebo, Japan:*** Home of the headquarters of Amphibious Force SEVENTH FLEET Detachment Sasebo, and the Commander Amphibious Squadron ELEVEN embarked onboard the USS ESSEX (LHD 2). The complete list of commands are:
  - a. Commander, Amphibious Squadron ELEVEN (CPR-11)
  - b. Commander, Mine Countermeasures Division ELEVEN
  - c. USS ESSEX (LHD 2)\*

- d. USS JUNEAU (LPD 10)\*
- e. USS FORT MCHENRY (LSD 43)\*
- f. USS HARPERS FERRY (LSD 49)\*
- g. USS SAFEGUARD (ARS 50)
- h. USS PATRIOT (MCM 7)
- i. USS GUARDIAN (MCM 5)

\* All of which form the ESSEX Amphibious Ready Group (ARG)

## II. Chronology 2003:

### April

**1-11:** HARPERS FERRY is in port Sasebo for up keep.

**12-13:** En route Okinawa

**14-15:** In port White Beach, embark Marines in preparation of CARAT INTEROPERABILITY TRAINING.

**16-30:** Commenced operations in the Philippine Sea in support of LF CARAT INEROPERABILITY TRAINING.

### May

**1:** LF CARAT INTEROPERABILITY TRAINING

**2-4:** In port White Beach for offload

**5-6:** En route Sasebo

**7-23:** In port Sasebo for upkeep

**24-25:** En route Okinawa

**7-23:** In port Sasebo for upkeep

**24-25:** En route Okinawa

**26-27:** On load, embark LANDING FORCE CARAT

**28-31:** En route Thailand

**June**

**1-5:** En route Thailand

**6:** In Port Sattahip Thailand

**7-8:** HARPERS FERRY is in the Gulf of Thailand for exercises in support of  
CARAT Thailand

**9:** In port Sattahip Thailand

**10-11:** HARPERS FERRY is in the Gulf of Thailand for exercises in support of  
CARAT Thailand

**12-13:** In port Sattahip Thailand

**14-15:** En route Singapore

**16-19:** In port Singapore for Change of Command Ceremony

**20-22:** En route Brunei

**23-25:** In port Brunei

**26:** HARPERS FERRY is in the South China Sea for exercises in support of  
CARAT Brunei

**27-28:** In port Brunei

**29-30:** En route Singapore

**July**

**1-2:** En route Singapore

**3-13:** In port Singapore

**14-17:** HARPERS FERRY commences exercises in support of CARAT Singapore.

**18:** HARPERS FERRY is in the South China Sea for CARAT Singapore.

**19-20:** HARPERS FERRY is in the Singapore area for CARAT Singapore.

**21:** En route Malaysia

**22-31:** CARAT Malaysia

### **August**

**1-7:** En route Okinawa

**8-10:** In port Okinawa for offload.

**11-13:** En route Sasebo

**14-31:** In port Sasebo for upkeep

### **September**

**1:** In port Sasebo for upkeep

**2-3:** En route Okinawa

**4-5:** In port Okinawa, embark Marines

**6-13:** En route Philippines for Blue/Green workups

**14-21:** HARPERS FERRY is in Manila Bay for Blue/Greens, ARGEX, SOCEX

**22-23:** En route Okinawa

**24:** In port Okinawa for offload

**25-26:** En route Sasebo

**27-29:** In port Sasebo for upkeep

**30:** In port Sasebo, commence SRA

**October**

**1-31: SRA**

**November**

**1-30: SRA**

**December**

**1-2: SRA**

**3-4: Sea Trails**

**5-6: HARPERS FERRY unloads ammo at anchorage**

**7-11: SESEF Range**

**12-31: Holiday Stand down**

**January 2004**

**1-11: Stand down.**

**12-18: In port Sasebo for upkeep**

**19-24: TYT**

**25: In port Sasebo**

**26-31: TYT**

**February**

**1-2: In port Sasebo**

**3-6: In port Sasebo, CART II**

**7-9: En route Yokosuka**

**10-20: In port Yokosuka for Training Availability**

**21-24: En route Sasebo**

**25-26: In port Sasebo, 3M BLA**

**27-29:** In port Sasebo for upkeep

### **March**

**1-2:** In port Sasebo

**3-5:** En route Okinawa

**6-7:** In port Okinawa for onload

**8-11:** HARPERS FERRY is in the Philippine Sea for Blue/Green exercises

**12-15:** In port Okinawa for offload to USS Fort McHenry.

**15:** Anchored Okinawa

**16-18:** En route Sasebo

**19-31:** In port Sasebo

### **III. Narrative of major events:**

In April of 2003, HARPERS FERRY embarked the 31<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit to begin training for Cooperation Afloat Readiness And Training (CARAT), a series of bilateral exercises designed to enhance interoperability between US and Southeast Asian forces. In May, HARPERS FERRY headed to Thailand to begin the first phase of CARAT. Embarked members of the Royal Thai Navy observed amphibious operations, Underway Replenishments, and Damage Control methods. HARPERS FERRY crewmembers cross-decked to a Royal Thai Navy ship, observing their operations and learning about their way of life. While in port Thailand, HARPERS FERRY's Medical Department, along with Medical Officers attached to Landing Force CARAT, participated in a MED/DEN CAP, giving hundreds of Thai residents much needed medical and dental treatments. Crewmembers and embarked Marines also participated in a COMREL project at a children's home, refurbishing bedrooms, re-wiring lights, and clearing the lawn of overgrowth and debris. The project was a resounding success.

A change of command ceremony was held on June 19 while in port Singapore. Commander Humberto L. Quintanilla II relieved Commander Bradley D. Martin as HARPERS FERRY's Commanding Officer. HARPERS FERRY then had a port visit to Brunei, where the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei toured the ship. The crew received a cultural experience while touring a mosque, experiencing first hand how the Muslim religion worships.

In July, HARPERS FERRY headed back to Singapore for interoperability exercises such as Leap Frogs, practicing Underway Replenishment maneuvers with the Singapore Navy. Members of the Singapore Boys Town had a rare opportunity to visit a US Navy vessel.

The final phase of CARAT began with a port visit to Malaysia. Members of the Malaysian Army came on board and toured the ship's amphibious crafts.

In August, HARPERS FERRY returned to Okinawa to commence offload returned to Sasebo for upkeep.

Marines embarked in September to begin Blue/Green workups in Manila Bay, Philippines. Upon completion of Blue/Green workups, HARPERS FERRY headed back to Sasebo to commence its Selected Repair Availability period. By December 2nd, SRA was complete and two days of sea trials followed. Holiday stand down began soon after.

In February, HARPERS FERRY made a port call in Yokosuka for the annual Training Availability. Crewmembers were trained in many different areas such as firefighting, force protection, and fuels to help maintain the ship's combat readiness. An in port period in Sasebo followed, where the crew was assessed on their equipment maintenance abilities.

March began the on load in Okinawa of the 31<sup>st</sup> Marine Service Support Group to commence Blue/Green exercises. On March 12, HARPERS FERRY cross-decked the load to USS FORT MCHENRY (LSD 43) due to a mechanical casualty. She then headed back to Sasebo for repairs.

#### **IV. Supporting Documents**

- (1) USS HARPERS FERRY (LSD-49) 2003 Command History
- (2) Biography and Photo of Commander Humberto L. Quintanilla II
- (3) 3.5" Floppy disk with command history file