



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS HERON (MHC 52)
FPO AA 34091-1951

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From: Commanding Officer, USS HERON (MHC 52)
To: Director, Naval Historical Society

Subj: USS HERON (MHC 52) 1999 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Supporting documents

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted as the USS HERON (MHC 52) command history for calendar year 1999.

A. L. Krueger
A. L. KRUEGER

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following basic command information is provided:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| a. COMMAND | USS HERON MHC-52 |
| b. UIC | V21864 |
| c. MISSION | The ship's mission is to clear harbor, coastal and ocean waters of acoustic, magnetic, pressure and contact type mines, utilizing reconnaissance, classification and neutralization tactics. The MHC Class design integrates modern mine countermeasures technology into a uniquely designed platform with exceptionally low magnetic and acoustic signatures to protect against mine detonations during mine hunting operations. |
| d. IMMEDIATE SENIOR | COMCMRON ONE |
| e. COMMANDING OFFICER | LCDR A. L. Krueger |
| f. PDS | Ingleside, TX. |

USS HERON (MHC 52) 1999 CHRONOLOGY

JANUARY 1999

01-04 Import Ingleside, TX, Holiday Stand Down
11-15 CART I (Inport Ingleside, TX)
11-22 Intermediate Maintenance Availability (Ingleside, TX)
19-22 Electronic Key Management System Testing (Ingleside, TX)
28-29 "Inventory" Physical Readiness Testing

FEBRUARY 1999

01 LCDR Stitt promoted to CDR Stitt
02 U/W, Corpus Christi Operational Area (CCOA)
Class "B" Fire in #1 Main Propulsion Diesel Engine
03 Returned to port (Ingleside, TX)
16 FEB-31MAR Diesel Engine Inspection
16-26 AN/SLQ-48 MNV Alteration
22 Underwater Hull Cleaning
22 FEB-05 MAR Restricted Maintenance Availability (RAV) (Ingleside, TX)

MARCH 1999

15 SQUADRON ONE Intel Assist Visit
16 Ammunition Offload
18 Navigation Certification (Administration)
19 Command Personnel Inspection - Dress Whites
22-24 U/W MCM Training (CCOA)
27 Dependent's Day Cruise
30 Navigation Certification "Check Ride" U/W (CCOA)

APRIL 1999

02 Planned Maintenance Availability-99 (PMA-99)
Conference
05 APR-09 JUN PMA-99 South Texas Ship Repair, Aransas Pass, TX
05-23 Intermediate Maintenance Availability
(IMAV) (Ingleside, TX)
16-22 "SNAPSHOT" - Establish Baseline Operating Parameters
20 Seamanship Training Team Course, Ingleside, TX
19-23 Pre Light-Off Training-1 (PLOT-1)
27 Safety Survey

MAY 1999

03-07 Pre Light-Off Training-2 (PLOT-2)
24 HERON departs South Texas Ship Repair for Ingleside,
TX
26-28 Light-Off Assessment (LOA)

JUNE 1999

01 Fast Cruise / Dock Trials, Ingleside, TX
02 Sea Trials, U/W (CCOA)
03 Spouse Appreciation Day Picnic, USO, Ingleside, TX
07-11 Engineering Limited Training Team (LTT)
10 Shifted Berths to B-3, PS2
10-11 AN/SLQ-48 Field Changes 33/37 Installation
10-21 AN/SQQ-32 Towed Body Replacement
11 AN/SQQ-32 Baseline Assessment
10-25 Restricted Maintenance Availability (RAV) (Ingleside,
TX)
12 Underwater Hull Cleaning
15 AN/SLQ-32 Towed Body removed from ship for
replacement
16 Shifted Berths to A-3, SS2
21-25 Engineering LTT
22 Ammunition Onload
26 Dependent's Day Cruise (CCOA)
29 Shipwide Second Class Swimmer Exam/Qualification
30 Shipwide Pistol/Shotgun Qualification

JULY 1999

06 Safety Stand Down
12-14 Underway MCM Training (CCOA)
15 Navigation LTT
26 Electromagnetic Ranging Facility (Ingleside on the
Bay, TX)

AUGUST 1999

02-04 Underway MCM Training (CCOA)
02-03 Mine Warfare LTT
04 Search and Rescue LTT
05 Mine Warfare LTT
10 Underwater Hull Cleaning
10-12 Engineering LTT
16-20 CART-II
27 Change of Command
30 AUG-03 SEP TSTA-I, Inport Ingleside, TX
31 AUG-02 SEP AN/SLQ-48 Fleet Technicians Meeting, Ingleside, TX

SEPTEMBER 1999

07-08 Underway, TSTA-I, CCOA
09 Fast Cruise / Ingleside, TX
10 Underway, TSTA-I, CCOA
13-17 TSTA-I, Inport Ingleside, TX
14-17 SRTT
17 Fast Cruise / Ingleside, TX
27 Underway, TSTA-I, CCOA
24 SEP-01 OCT TSTA-I, Inport Ingleside, TX

OCTOBER 1999

05-06 Underway MCM Training, Transit to Beaumont, TX
07-10 Inport Beaumont, TX for "NAVY DAYS" Celebration
11-15 Underway, TSTA-II, Transit to Panama City, FL
16-17 Inport, Panama City, FL
18-22 Underway, TSTA-II, Panama City Operational Area
(PCOA)
23-24 Inport, Panama City, FL
25-29 Underway, TSTA-II, Panama City Operational Area
(PCOA)
30-31 Inport, Panama City, FL

NOVEMBER 1999

03-07 Underway MCM Training, Transit to Ingleside, TX
12 Underway TSTA-III (CCOA)
16-18 Underway FEP Rehearsal (CCOA)
22-23 Underway TSTA-III (CCOA)
24-28 Thanksgiving Holiday Stand Down
30 Underway FEP Rehearsal (CCOA)

DECEMBER 1999

06-07 Underwater Hull Cleaning
06-17 AN/SQQ-32 Sonar Lock Overhaul
06-17 Fleet Maintenance Availability (FMAV) (Ingleside, TX)
15 SRTT
18-31 Christmas Holiday Stand Down

1999 was a banner year for the mighty warship HERON. Her performance throughout the year can only be described as top shelf. As the established pace setter in the class, she amassed numerous "firsts" in the MCM community. The following highlights cannot completely express the depth of HERON's year.

The first quarter saw the beginning of the Command Assessment of Readiness and training (CART) I. This phase of the training cycle demonstrated the ability of the ship to diagnosis it's own shortcomings. During this same period LCDR STITT, the Commanding Officer, was promoted to the grade of Commander. On March 08 one of HERON'S Petty Officers was shot in an incident with a local Police Department. Service member was put on limited duty status and became a loss to Heron.

HERON, while underway in the Corpus Christi Operation Area, experienced a class Bravo fire on the #1 Main Propulsion Diesel Engine. The cat like reactions of the Engineering Department used its knowledge and experience to quickly extinguish the blaze and prevent extensive damage and personnel injuries. With just one shot of HALON the fire was out and the ship returned to port to make major repairs to the ship.

The Planned Maintenance Availabilty-99 kicked off in the early part of April. This period allowed government contractors and ship's force to perform needed repairs. All the exterior decks were refinished as well as adding noise reduction enhancements.

In June, the last month of the PMA, the war fighting and mission capabilities of the HERON increased dramatically with the installation of the SQQ-32 V2 sonar. Replacing the V1 sonar, the V2 has proven to be a much more reliable and higher quality sonar. "Seeing" further and clearer underwater, it allows for the ship to accomplish its missions with minimal down time.

With the yard period complete, the focus shifted to completing the Notional Training Cycle. First, HERON spent one week in August completing the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) II. The crew effectively demonstrated its ability to detect, classify, and prosecute mines. In that quarter, the HERON held change of command.

On August 27th LCDR Krueger relieved CDR Stitt as the Commanding Officer.

After a successful CART II, Phase I of the Tailored Ships Training Availability (TSTA I) commenced. TSTA I consisted of seamanship training and MIW training. These evolutions progressed into TSTA II, which began October 15th. Working with Afloat Training Group (ATG), Ingleside, TX, the crew executed an aggressive training schedule. During the TSTA II process, underway training in the Panama City Operational Area included: Q-routing, mine hunting, sonar conditions checks, Mine Neutralization System (MNS) operations and small boat vectoring. The TSTA II training period enabled HERON to increase proficiency in its primary mission area of MIW. On 28 Oct, while moored at Naval Coastal Systems Station Panama City, FL, HERON spilled less than five gallons of a water-oil mixture over the side. The spill was removed completely with no hazard to property, wildlife or natural resources.

With the arrival of winter, the HERON prepared and celebrated the holiday period with a ship's party on December 10th. The families of the crew were happy to utilize this much needed stand down.