



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS MASON (DDG 87)
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JAN 16 2004

From: Commanding Officer, USS MASON (DDG 87)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR CY02

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G, Command Histories

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Commanding Officer's Biography
(5) Commissioning Book
(6) Welcome Aboard Pamphlets
(7) Launching Publication
(8) USS MASON (DDG 87) Photograph

1. In accordance with reference (a), USS MASON command history for calendar year 2002 is submitted.


DAVID J. GALE

USS MASON (DDG 87)
COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION
1 JAN 2002-31 DEC 2002

Command Title: PRE-COMMISSIONING UNIT MASON (DDG 87)

UIC: 3171A

Missions: Anti-Air Warfare, Anti-Submarine Warfare, Anti-Surface Warfare, Strike Warfare, and Maritime Interdiction Operations

ISIC: Comander, Destroyer Squadron Twenty-Six (COMDESRON 26)

Commanding Officer: Commander David J. Gale, USN

Homeport: Bath Iron Works, Bath, ME

Aircraft Assigned: None

USS MASON (DDG 87)
CHRONOLOGY
1 JAN 2002-31 DEC 2002

Background: Bath Iron Works laid the keel of MASON on **January 23, 2000**. The Pre-Commissioning Unit MASON, Bath, Maine was stood up on **January 7, 2001**. The Pre-Commissioning Detachment, Norfolk, Virginia was stood up **18 March 2001**. On **June 23, 2001** MASON was christened, and launched. During 2002 MASON was a Pre-Commissioning Unit while the ship was being built at Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine.

1 JAN 2002

-Phase I personnel in Bath, Maine supervising Construction phase of MASON.

08

-Gas Turbine Generator Light Off complete.

25

-Phase II Personnel start arriving at MASON Training Detachment Norfolk, VA for pre-commissioning training and required schools.

04 MAR 2002

-Port Canaveral, FL proposed as Commissioning site.

12 APR 2002

-Commanding Officer David J. Gale attended the first Commissioning committee meeting held in Port Canaveral.

29-Phase II Personnel commence transfer from the MASON Pre-Commissioning Detachment Norfolk, VA to MASON Pre-Commissioning Unit Bath, ME.

16-Commander Destroyer Squadron Twenty-Six, Captain Roncolato visited and conducted a review of pre-commissioning progress, all hands call and ship tour.

18 MAY 2002

-Commanding Officer and crew of MASON hosted veterans of USS MASON DE 529 in Bath for a tour of the ship and the opportunity for the two crews to meet.

03 JUN 2002

-MASON Pre-Commissioning Unit started the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training I (CART I).

17-Phase III Personnel arrived at Pre-Commissioning Detachment Norfolk.

21-MASON Pre-Commissioning Unit successfully completed Command Assessment of Readiness and Training, Phase I.

20 JUL 2002

-Mason crew hosted DE 529 veterans conducting a picnic and ship tour.

22-In homeport Post Shakedown Availability approved.

18 AUG 2002

-MASON Main Engine Light Off (MELO) was completed.

19-Phase III Personnel arrive at Pre-Commissioning Unit Bath, ME.

23-Information Technicians, Electronic Technicians and Engineering Team trainers successfully completed.

09 SEPT 2002

-Phase IV personnel arrive at the Precommissioning Detachment (PCD) in Norfolk, VA.

20-Combat Information Center Fundamentals and Team Trainer in Wallops Island completed successfully.

13 OCT 2002

-Docking Trials successfully completed.

21-Pre-commissioning Unit MASON gets underway for the first time, departing from Bath, ME for combined Alpha/Bravo Builders Trials.

24-MASON returns to Bath, ME after completing a successful combined Builders Trials.

29-Acceptance Trials inport successfully completed in Bath, ME.

11 NOV 2002

-Phase IV Personnel arrive at the Pre-Commissioning Unit in Bath, ME.

22-Bath Iron Works delivers the ship to the United States Navy. Commander Gale is pinned Commander at Sea by USS MASON DE 529 Plank Owner Mr. James Graham. Plank Owner's tour began on Pre-Commissioning Unit MASON.

04 DEC 2002

-Cooperative CSSQT planning meeting with the Spanish Navy Frigate Alvaro De Bazan F101 and MASON was conducted in Ferrol, Spain.

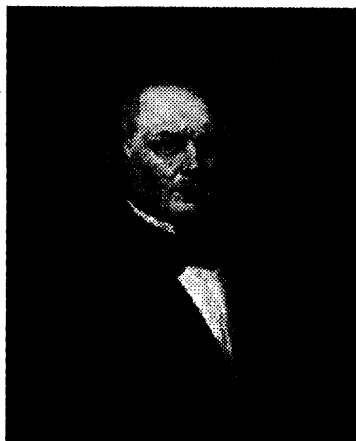
22-Crew Cert Phase I conducted by Commander Destroyer Squadron Twenty-Four.

USS MASON (DDG 87)
NARRATIVE
1 JAN 2002-31 DEC 2002

Naming of the Ship:

USS MASON (DDG 87) is the third ship to bear the name and is the 37th ship of the Arleigh Burke Class of AEGIS Guided Missile Destroyers.

The first ship to bear the name MASON was named for John Young Mason, born April 19, 1799 in Greene County, Virginia. Both a political leader and diplomat, he was Secretary of the Navy for Presidents John Tyler and James K.



Polk. The first MASON (DD 191) was laid down by Newport News Shipbuilding & Drydock Co, Newport News, Virginia on 10 July 1918 and launched 8 March 1919. The ship's sponsor was Miss Mary Mason Williams, great-granddaughter of Secretary Mason and the ship was commissioned at Norfolk Navy Yard on 28 February 1920. The Commissioning Commanding Officer was Lieutenant Commander Carl F. Holden.

As a result of the Washington Treaty of 6 February 1922 limiting Naval Armament, DD 191 was decommissioned at the Philadelphia Navy Yard 3 July 1922. After World War II broke out in Europe, MASON was recommissioned 4 December 1939. Under terms of the "Destroyers for Bases" executive agreement between the United States and Great Britain, the MASON became one of 50 ships turned over in exchange for 99 year leases on bases in the western hemisphere. DD 191 was transferred to the British Royal Navy in Halifax, Nova Scotia on 8 October 1940 and renamed the HMS BROADWATER H-81 the next day. Assigned to the Newfoundland Escort Force in July 1941, the ship patrolled the North Atlantic and guarded convoys against the German submarine "wolfpacks" into the fall of that year. Early in the morning of 17 October 1941 she attacked a U-boat, one of a pack assaulting an American convoy SC-48 south of Iceland.

Twenty-four hours later she herself fell victim to torpedoes of U-101 and sank the same day.

The second ship to bear the name MASON was named for Ensign Newton Henry Mason born on 24 December 1918 in New York City. He enlisted as a seaman in the Naval Reserve on 7 November 1940 and was appointed an Aviation Cadet on 10 February 1941. He was assigned to Fighting Squadron Three in September 1941 and died following aerial combat against the Japanese forces in the Battle of the Coral Sea, 8 and 9 May 1942. Ensign Mason was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his skill and courage in battle.



The second MASON DE 529 was laid down by the Boston Navy Yard, Boston, Massachusetts in October 1943 and launched 17 November 1943. The ship was sponsored by Mrs. David Mason, mother of Ensign Mason and commissioned 20 March 1944. Lieutenant Commander William Blackford was the Commissioning Commanding Officer. MASON DE 529 served as convoy escort in the Atlantic through the remainder of World War II.

MASON DE 529 has the distinction of being the only U.S. Navy destroyer to be manned with a predominantly black enlisted



crew. This was the first time black Americans were permitted to be trained and serve in ratings other than cooks and stewards. In late 1943 the Navy announced its plan to place an all black crew with white Officers aboard MASON. One hundred and sixty black Sailors were enrolled in all fields of operational and technical training and manned the ship at commissioning. Although known as "Eleanor's Folly" for Eleanor Roosevelt's introduction of the idea for an all black crew, the MASON served with distinction during World War II. During the worst North Atlantic storm of the century, MASON was serving as escort to a convoy of merchant ships bound for England. During the storm the convoy was forced to break up and MASON was chosen to escort a section of ships to their destination. With land in sight, the MASON's deck split, threatening the structural integrity of the ship. Emergency repairs were conducted and MASON returned immediately to assist the remainder of the convoy.

The MASON crew was recommended for commendations by their Captain, Lieutenant Commander Bill Blackford, and the Convoy Commander, Commander Alfred Lind. The commendations were never awarded. At the end of the war MASON was assigned as a training ship operating from Miami, Florida until being decommissioned and sold for scrap in 1947. On July 26, 1947 President Truman signed Executive Order 9981, officially desegregating the armed forces.

Through the efforts of the MASON veterans and author Mary Pat Kelly, the MASON story has been chronicled in the book "Proudly We Served." Their persistence in telling the MASON story paid off in 1994 when President Clinton awarded the long overdue commendation to sixty-seven surviving crewmembers. In 1998, the Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton made official his decision to name an ARLEIGH BURKE Class Destroyer the USS MASON (DDG 87) to mark the contributions of USS MASON DE 529 Sailors towards equality and desegregation in our Navy's ranks.



Enclosure (3)

On a cold morning of 23 January 2000, Bath Iron Works (BIW) laid the keel of the MASON. On June 23, 2001 MASON was christened and launched. MASON was Bath Iron Works' last warship to be launched on inclined ways, ending a 117-year BIW tradition and giving way to a new floating dry-dock. With thousands witnessing the historic event, the 5,800-ton USS MASON slid down the greased inclined path precisely at 3:25 p.m. hitting the waters of the Kennebec River at high tide.

The Honorable Olympia J. Snowe, the United States Senator from Maine, and the ships sponsor, christened Hull number 470, USS MASON, by breaking the champagne bottle over her stem. MASON Sailors worked side by side with Bath Iron Works workers in the last traditional wedge rally and launching down the inclined ways. Senator Snowe, Prospective Commanding Officer David J. Gale, Kathleen M. Bond (niece of Ensign Newton H. Mason) and Barbara B. Graham (wife of DE 529 crew member James Graham) all contributed to this monumental event.

Vice Chief of Naval Education and Training Rear Admiral David L. Brewer, III, USN was the principle speaker for the christening and senior Naval Officer at the ceremony.

USS MASON
Coat of Arms

BLAZON

SHIELD: Argent two chevronels Gules between two lion's heads respectant erased Azure and a demi-trident Proper.

CREST: Upon a helm superimposed on a United States Naval Officer's sword and a cutlass saltirewise points down Proper and rising from a wreath Argent and Gules, a laurel wreath Proper,



ENCLOSURE (3)

overall a fouled anchor Azure interlaced with cross paty Or.

SUPPORTERS AND MOTTO: A scroll Argent edged Gules doubled Azure, inscribed "PROUDLY WE SERVE" of the like interlaced by two laurel branches superimposed at cross point by a shamrock Proper. The motto is given by African American Sailors of DE 529 who sailed in her during World War II and made history with their selfless bravery in the defense of our country.

SEAL

The coat of arms as blazoned in full color upon a white oval enclosed by a dark blue collar edged on the outside with a gold rope and bearing the inscription "USS MASON" at top and "DDG 87" in base all in gold.

SYMBOLISM

SHIELD: Dark blue and gold are the colors traditionally used by the Navy; red, white and blue are our national colors. The two chevrons commemorate DD 191 and DE 529, the two previous ships named "USS MASON." The opposing lions, which are adapted from the Mason Family Coat of Arms, represent the World War II Pacific and Atlantic campaigns. The left facing lion symbolizes the service and sacrifice of Ensign Newton Henry Mason in the Battle of the Coral Sea. The right facing lion symbolizes the crew's courageous actions in the North Atlantic during Convoy NY 119 in the ship bearing Ensign Mason's name. The trident, symbol of sea prowess, symbolizes DDG 87's modern warfare capabilities: The Aegis Weapons System, Theater Ballistic Missile Defense and Cooperative Engagement Capability.

CREST: The helm symbolizes a strong defense and the projection of power. The anchor refers to John Young Mason, namesake of DD 191 who was Secretary of the Navy under Presidents John Tyler and James K. Polk. The cross alludes to the Distinguished Flying Cross awarded to ENS Newton Henry Mason. The wreath denotes the many awards, honors and achievements of the previous ships named MASON and crew who served them.

SUPPORTERS: Laurel is emblematic of the honor and high achievement of the African American crew of DE 529 and marks their selfless contribution to the eventual

desegregation of the Navy. The Shamrock is symbolic of their good fortune during arduous operations in the North Atlantic and the warm Irish welcome afforded them on their port visit to Northern Ireland.

2002

The New year began with the Pre-Commissioning Unit moored in Bath, Maine at the Bath Iron Works shipyards still under construction. During the early days of the Pre-Commissioning Unit, Prospective Commanding Officer David J. Gale, Executive Officer Theodore A. Zobel and Command Master Chief (CMC) Timothy Heath, assembled the MASON team. Phase I Personnel (mostly department heads, and some senior enlisted) arrived first: LT [REDACTED], Operations Officer, LT [REDACTED], Engineer Officer, LT [REDACTED], Supply Officer, EMC [REDACTED], and GMC [REDACTED] to name a few.

Beginning 25 February 2002, Phase II personnel began arriving at MASON Training Detachment Norfolk, VA. CMC Heath acted as mentor and Officer-in-Charge of the Detachment. HMCS [REDACTED] remained at the Pre-Commissioning Detachment to ensure crew was physically fit before transferring to the Pre-Commissioning Unit where limited Navy Medical Facilities were available. PNC [REDACTED] was also crucial to personnel processing and management at the Detachment. The Detachment was key to all new personnel attending Bath Iron Works' ship-specific training and Naval Enlisted Classified (NEC) training. As the MASON teams finished these schools they slowly transitioned to the Pre-Commissioning Unit in Bath, Maine. In February, the Command Master Chief gave his first Standards of Conduct training to the future crew of USS MASON (DDG 87)

On 29 April 2002, Phase II Personnel started to transfer from the MASON Pre-Commissioning unit Norfolk, VA to MASON Pre-Commissioning Unit Bath, Maine. Some of the junior members of the Wardroom and Chiefs' mess were among the personnel to transfer, and including LTjg [REDACTED], LTjg [REDACTED], LTjg [REDACTED] and FCCS [REDACTED].

On 21 June 2002, MASON took the first step in completing an Inter-Deployment Training Cycle by completing the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training, Phase I (CART I). For the first time, MASON's Officers and Navigation team attended Maritime Safety International

The Damage Control Training team was lead by the Executive Officer, LCDR Ted Zobel. The Combat Information Center Team traveled to Aegis Training Readiness Center, Wallops Island to complete MASON's first Combat Information Center Team Trainer. MASON successfully completed the team trainer led by the Combat System Officer, LCDR [REDACTED]; the Weapons Officer, LT [REDACTED]; the System Test Officer, LT [REDACTED]; and OSC [REDACTED]. Training Supervisor school was also successfully completed in Wallops, Island lead by OS1 [REDACTED], OS1 [REDACTED], STG1 [REDACTED] and STG1 [REDACTED]. On September 16, in Wallops Island, Commander Gale pinned MASON's first newly selected Chief Petty Officers, STGC [REDACTED], OSC [REDACTED], EMC [REDACTED], MAC [REDACTED], GSCM [REDACTED] and ISC [REDACTED]. Towards the end of September, the Aegis Test Team with crew participation started preparations and maintenance to support Builder's Trials. For Builder's Trials' Ammo onload, Explosive Ordnance Handling Qualification and Certification boards were held towards the end of September.

During October, MASON conducted numerous Main Space Fire drills and General Quarters drills incorporating the entire crew. MASON successfully completed Crash and Smash Team school in Norfolk, VA. On October 12, MASON came to life with the completion of her Dock Trials. On October 19, MASON conducted an onload to include: two Standard Missiles, 24 Blind Loaded and Plugged 5 inch rounds and numerous small arms for M60 and 50 cal in preparations for combined A/B Builders Trials.

On October 21, MASON got underway for the first time for Builder's Trials. MASON accomplished the following for the first time: Standard Missile firing, 5" Gunshoot, Smalls Arms firing, Anti-Submarine Warfare Demonstration, Overall Combat System Operation Test and Super Rapid Off-Board Blooming Chaff launch. In Bath Iron Works tradition, a broom was placed on the mast signifying a clean sweep. On October 24, MASON returned from her first underway. The next week, MASON went right into Acceptance Trials, which finished November 1.

In early November, MASON's Officers and Navigation team attended their third Maritime Safety International located at Newport Rhode Island, one final time prior to MASON's first underway as USS MASON (DDG 87) commissioned without ceremony. By 11 November, 98 percent

Enclosure (3)

located at Norfolk Naval Base, in order to strengthen their ship handling skills. During June, Commander Gale increased planning and communications with the Spanish Navy's Commanding Officer of Alvaro De Bazan F101 about future Cooperative Combat System Ship Qualification Test.

On July 22, MASON's crew hosted a picnic and ship tour for USS MASON DE 529 veterans to include Jim Graham, (President of MASON DE 529 Veterans Association) Lorenzo A. Dufau and others. Both events were extremely successful, creating a tight union between MASON crews old and new. Toward the end of July, MASON DDG 87 sponsored a recruit training division from which some non-designated sailors would later be drawn for the Commissioning crew of USS MASON (DDG 87). Commander Gale and Command Master Chief Heath traveled to Recruit Training Center Great Lakes, Illinois, to present the MASON Guidon to the Division. By the end of July, manning was nearly complete with an aggressive training plan to support Delivery and Crew Moveaboard. After a strong campaign by the Commanding Officer to save money and increase morale, USS MASON's (DDG 87) in-homeport Post Shakedown Availability was approved. MASON started small arms qualifications early to support increased anti-terrorism requirements.

During the month of August, MASON's main engines were successfully lit-off and MASON was one step closer to getting underway for the first time. Great planning from the top was crucial to facilitate an achievable plan for a crew-wide accomplishment of approximately 12,000 personnel qualifications prior to Delivery and Sailaway. Engineering department led by LT [REDACTED], Engineer Officer; ENS [REDACTED], Main Propulsion Assistant; GSCS [REDACTED], and ENC [REDACTED] successfully completed an intense engineering team trainer at Aegis Readiness Training Center Detachment Philadelphia. During the month of August the Information Technicians and Electronic Technicians, led by the Electronic Maintenance Officer, CW02 [REDACTED], and ETC [REDACTED], successfully completed their team trainer at Naval Air Warfare Center, St. Indigo, MD. In late August, MASON's Officers and Navigation team attended the second Maritime Safety International located at Newport, Rhode Island.

In September, preparations for move aboard and Light Off Assessment (LOA) started with MASON's first Main Space Fire Drill conducted by the Damage Control Training Team.

Enclosure (3)

of MASON's crew had reported to Pre-Commissioning Unit Bath, Maine.

During the Delivery Ceremony, on November 22, Mr. Allan Cameron, President of Bath Irons Works, said during the Delivery Ceremony, "We celebrate the culmination of nearly 48 months of hard work and dedication by the Navy/Bath Iron Works Team....Today, as the Navy takes Delivery of MASON, the most sophisticated surface combatant in the world, and as we continue to make final preparations for your move aboard in early January and your departure in mid-March, we feel that the Supervisor of Ship Building and Bath Iron Works shipbuilding Team have provided you with a superb ship."

The Delivery of MASON authorized the Captain to wear the command-at-sea insignia. Navy regulations established the wearing of this pin to recognize the awesome responsibility of command. It also represents CDR Gale's transition from the Commanding Officer Pre-commissioning Unit MASON to Commanding Officer USS MASON. Mr. Jim Graham, President of USS MASON DE 529 Veterans Association, pinned CDR Gale thus recognizing him as Commanding Officer USS MASON (DDG 87)!

Commanding Officer, CDR David J. Gale, concluded the ceremony by asking the crew how they felt about the task that lies ahead and the crew answered, "We are fired up sir!" Following the Ceremony, Veterans of MASON DE 529, and some of the newly arrived crewmembers of MASON (DDG 87) were able to interact for the first time. Mr. Jim Graham and Lorenzo A. Dufau, World War II Veterans, were the only DE 529 crewmembers in attendance.

On December 4, CDR Gale, LT [REDACTED], LT [REDACTED] and LT [REDACTED] went to Ferrol, Spain for MASON's first meeting with the crew of Alvaro De Bazan F101. The meeting was in preparation for Alvaro De Bazan and MASON 's cooperative Combat System Ship Qualification Test scheduled for the summer of 2003. The week of December 9, MASON satisfactorily completed Crew Certification Phase I with Commander Destroyer Squadron 24 from Mayport, Florida. Commander Destroyer Squadron 26 could not complete the inspection because of a Mediterranean Deployment.

Due to hard work by the Chain of Command, MASON is holiday stand down was prior to move aboard allowing

Enclosure (3)

MASON's crew members more time with their family during the holidays. With move aboard right around the corner, MASON's crew spent the end of 2002 with their families.