



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
**USS MOUNT WHITNEY (LCC 20)**  
**FLEET POST OFFICE**  
**NEW YORK 09517**

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From: Commanding Officer, USS MOUNT WHITNEY (LCC 20)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, DC 20374

Subj: Command History; forwarding of (OPNAV Report 5720-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5720.12C

Encl: (1) Ship's History 1983  
(2) Narrative of Significant Events  
(3) Ship's Fact Sheet  
(4) Biography of Commanding Officer  
(5) Photograph of Commanding Officer  
(6) List of Commanding Officers

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (6) are forwarded.

  
R. C. JOHNSON, Jr.

Copy to: (w/encl)  
COMNAVSURFLANT  
COMSECONDFLT  
COMPHIBGRU TWO  
COMPHIBRON TWELVE

**USS MOUNT WHITNEY (LCC-20)  
SHIP'S HISTORY: 1983**

Jan 01 Inport Norfolk, Va. COMSECONDFLT and CG FOURTH MAB embarked  
Jan 06 Fast Cruise, FOURTH MAB debarks.  
Jan 11 COMSECONDFLT departs. Underway for Mobile Training Team  
Evaluation and Newport, R.I.  
Jan 15 Inport Newport, R.I. for exercise "OPEN ROAD".  
COMSTRIKFLTLANT, COMCARSTRIKFOR, COMPHIBGRU TWO embark.  
Jan 21 COMSTRIKFLTLANT, COMCARSTRIKFOR, COMPHIBGRU TWO depart.  
Underway for Norfolk, Va.  
Jan 22 Inport Norfolk, Va. COMSECONDFLT embarks.  
Jan 24 FOURTH MAB embarks.  
Jan 25 Canadian Naval Attache to U.S. calls on COMSECONDFLT.  
Jan 27 CARSTRIKFOR, COMPHIBGRU TWO, COMASGRU TWO, COMMANDER  
AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE call on COMSTRIKFLTLANT.  
Feb 02 COMSECONDFLT departs.  
Feb 03 Underway for Vacapes - Mobile Training Team assessment.  
Feb 05 Inport Norfolk, Va. COMSECONDFLT returns.  
Feb 15 Commence Admin Inspection conducted by COMPHIBGRU TWO.  
Feb 22 FOURTH MAB debarks.  
Feb 24 Deputy Secretary of Defense calls on COMSECONDFLT.  
Feb 25 Underway for OPPE/PEB and Ft. Lauderdale, Fl.  
Mar 01 Inport Ft. Lauderdale, Fl. COMDESRON ONE calls on  
COMSECONDFLT.  
Mar 04 Underway for Nassau, Bahamas.  
Mar 05 Inport Nassau, Bahamas.  
Mar 06 COMSECONDFLT hosts reception on flight deck.  
Mar 08 Underway St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.  
Mar 10 At anchor St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. COMSECONDFLT hosts  
Navy League reception onboard.  
Mar 14 Underway for READEX 1-83 (Puerto Rico OPAREA)  
Mar 17 COMSECONDFLT departs via helo for Roosevelt Roads, P.R.  
Mar 18 Inport San Juan, Puerto Rico.  
Mar 22 Underway Puerto Rico OPAREA - HARPOONEX.  
Mar 28 Secretary of the Navy Arrives.  
Mar 29 Secretary of the Navy departs. COMSECONDFLT departs for  
Roosevelt Roads, P.R. Enroute to Norfolk, Va.  
Mar 31 Personnel Inspection (Dress Blues).  
Apr 01 Inport Norfolk, Va.  
Apr 04 Senator Arlen Specter calls on COMSECONDFLT.  
Apr 11 CG FOURTH MAB embarks.  
Apr 21 COMPHIBGRU TWO embarks.  
Apr 22 Flagship Change of Command - CAPT. ROBERT C. JOHNSON JR.  
relieves CAPT. DAVID M. BENNETT as Commanding Officer of  
USS MOUNT WHITNEY (LCC-20).  
Apr 25 Underway for exercise SOLID SHIELD 83.  
Apr 26 COMAW calls on CG FOURTH MAB. COMSECONDFLT returns.

Enclosure (1)

May 01 CG 79 ARCOM, Deputy DOSAC, DCOS Plans and Policy CINCLANT, COMNAVSURFLANT and COMPHIBGRU TWO visit COMSECONDFLT.  
 May 05 Inport Norfolk, Va.  
 May 09 Commence 3-M inspection by COMNAVSURFLANT 3M Team.  
 May 20 Command Personnel Inspection (Dress Whites).  
 May 27 Underway for UNITED EFFORT/OCEAN SAFARI 83.  
 Jun 12 COMCARSTRIKFOR, COMASGRU TWO, COMSTRIKGRU THREE call on COMSECONDFLT.  
 Jun 17 Inport Brest, France. Mayor of Brest calls on COMSTRIKFLTLANT.  
 Jun 21 Underway for Plymouth, England.  
 Jun 22 Inport Plymouth, England.  
 Jun 23 Command Personnel Inspection (Dress Whites).  
 Jun 26 Underway for Hamburg, Germany.  
 Jun 28 Inport Hamburg, Germany. Senate Representatives, American Consul General, and Garrison Command Hamburg call on COMSTRIKFLTLANT.  
 Jun 30 Russian passenger ship MIKKAIL KALININ moors across pier from flagship.  
 Jul 04 Fourth of July celebration onboard. Fireworks display over Elbe river. COMSTRIKFLTLANT hosts onboard reception.  
 Jul 05 COMSTRIKFLTLANT debarks flagship. Underway for Norfolk, Va.  
 Jul 15 Inport Norfolk, Va.  
 Jul 18 COMSECONDFLT reembarks.  
 Jul 26 Fleet Surgeon calls on COMSECONDFLT.  
 Aug 10 Twenty-one Congressional Representatives arrive for tour and brief. COMSERVGRU TWO calls on COMSECONDFLT.  
 Aug 12 COMNAVAIRLANT calls on COMSECONDFLT.  
 Aug 17 COMPHIBRON TEN calls on Commanding Officer.  
 Aug 19 COMPHIBGRU TWO arrives for visit/tour of the ship.  
 Aug 22 Helo fly-on pierside by HS-1.  
 Aug 23 Underway for READEX 2-83.  
 Aug 29 CNO, COMCARGRU SIX, COMDESRON 22, MCPON, COMCARGRU EIGHT, COMDESGRU EIGHT and COMDESRON 32 visit ship for brief/tour.  
 Aug 30 RADM Flatley and RADM Fitch visit COMSECONDFLT.  
 Sep 01 0001 MOUNT WHITNEY transfers to COMPHIBGRU TWELVE.  
 Sep 02 Proceed to rendezvous with Coral Sea Battle Group Central American Operations.  
 Sep 15 Inport Norfolk, Va.  
 Sep 19 FOURTH MAB embarks. CMC calls on COMSECONDFLT.  
 Oct 03 COMPHIBGRU TWO calls on COMSECONDFLT.  
 Oct 18 Fast Cruise.  
 Oct 19 Underway for Vacapes - PRE-INSURV.  
 Oct 20 Inport Norfolk, Va.  
 Nov 01 Underway Vacapes - INSURV Inspection.  
 Nov 16 MOUNT WHITNEY receives Battle "E" Award.  
 Dec 15 COMNAVAIRLANT calls on COMSECONDFLT. British Naval Attache calls on COMSECONDFLT.

Enclosure (1)

**USS MOUNT WHITNEY (LCC-20)**  
**NARRATIVE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS**

- Feb 25 - Apr 01 READEX 1-83/MSR (Mobile Sea Range) provided Commander Second Fleet with the opportunity to conduct free moving exercises in a realistic ocean environment. MSR controlled and reconstructed exercises designed to improve anti-air and anti-surface warfare readiness of the forces. The READEX 1-83 scenario simulated a battle group controlling 20,000 miles of hostile ocean area. MOUNT WHITNEY as Mobile Range Operation Center (MROC) provided range safety and scenario control. Secretary of the Navy, John Lehman, observed the exercise and was given an onboard debrief by COMSECONDFLT. Additionally, enroute to the exercise, MOUNT WHITNEY aided in the search and rescue operation involving two downed Navy F-14's. Two crewmen were rescued and two perished in the mishap.
- Apr 25 - May 05 Exercise "SOLID SHIELD 83" tested the armed forces coordination in a wartime situation. The Navy, Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps all played key roles culminating in a dawn amphibious assault landing at ONSLOW Beach, North Carolina. MOUNT WHITNEY conducted the Operational Effectiveness Demonstration (OED) of JINTACCS, a Joint Message Formating System.
- May 27 - Jul 15 MOUNT WHITNEY, with Commander Striking Fleet Atlantic embarked, served as the command ship for exercises "UNITED EFFORT 83", and "OCEAN SAFARI 83". Involved were a multi-national force of 90 ships and 300 aircraft. During "UNITED EFFORT", U.S., Canadian, and British ships and aircraft participated in coordinated anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine warfare exercises. The USS AMERICA Battle Group, returning from the Mediterranean, provided the opposing force. "OCEAN SAFARI" consisted of coordinated ASW exercises, a defense of sea lanes and simulated CV air strikes against selected land targets.
- Aug 23 - Sep 15 READEX 2-83 consisted of three phases: Anti-carrier Warfare (ACW) exercises, Central American Presence and Mobile Sea Range (MSR) operations. During the ACW phase, forces consisting of U.S. Navy aircraft, surface and submarine units and U.S. Coast Guard ships opposed the JFK Battle Group. During the Central American Presence phase, MOUNT WHITNEY conducted operations with the USS MISSISSIPPI Surface Action Group (SAG) and later rendezvoused with the

Coral Sea Battle Group off Nicaragua. In the final phase, MSR, MOUNT WHITNEY defended against manned raids, scoring a direct hit on a target drone with a BPDMS missile.

Nov 16

The Commander Naval Surface Force Atlantic Fleet awarded USS MOUNT WHITNEY the Battle Efficiency "E", with departmental awards for Supply, Navigation and Deck Seamanship, Engineering, Communication, Command and Control, Electronic Warfare, Anti-Air Warfare, and Damage Control.

Enclosure (2)

**USS MOUNT WHITNEY (LCC-20)**  
**FACT SHEET**

The USS Mount Whitney (LCC-20) was constructed by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., and is the second in the Blue Ridge class of command ships.

The ship is named for the 14,946 foot peak in the Sierra Nevada range in California, the first ship in the Navy to bear this name.

The 620 foot Mount Whitney, with a compliment of 750 men and officers, serves as flagship for Commander U.S. Second Fleet; Commander Amphibious Group Two; and Commanding General, Fourth Marine Amphibious Brigade. The ship is homeported in Norfolk, Va.

Since commissioning, the ship has participated in fleet operations in the Mediterranean, Caribbean, and North Atlantic. The ship underwent two six month overhauls in the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, in 1974 and 1979. Mount Whitney's long list of accomplishments and awards includes seven Battle Efficiency "E" awards, receipt of the Meritorious Unit Commendation and numerous department efficiency awards.

One of the largest and most sophisticated command ships ever commissioned, Mount Whitney embodies elements of some of the largest military command and communications systems currently in operation, afloat or ashore. A modular amphibious control center gives the Amphibious Task Force Commander control of all tactical phases of the landing operation. The control is greatly enhanced by Mount Whitney's Naval Tactical Data System (NTDS) which presents an instantaneous display of the tactical situation of friendly and enemy forces. The heart of the system is the four computers located in the Automatic Data Processing Module. Display of tactical information and real time tactical situations is available from any one of the 28 consoles located in the various command control modules. This complex is served by one of the largest tactical intelligence centers and communications units in the Navy.

The ships communications center can handle 100,000 messages a month, and its intelligence center is the most sophisticated of its kind afloat in any navy.

Although the main fighting equipment is the electronics and communications suite, Mount Whitney is also armed with two rapid fire 3"/50mm gun mounts and the Basic Point Defense Missile System consisting of two launchers, each capable of firing eight Sparrow III missiles.

The ship carries enough food to feed the crew for ninety days. It also can transport supplies to support an emergency evacuation of 3000 people. Its evaporators produce over 100,000 gallons of fresh water daily, enough to meet the needs of a large ocean liner.

The ship travels at a maximum speed of 23 knots with a fuel capacity of over one million gallons of Navy distillate and JP-5 fuel. This would permit the ship to steam at 16 knots for 35 days - from Norfolk, Va., to Mozambique in the Indian Ocean and back.

The ship's two anchors weigh 11 tons each and are attached to 180 fathoms (1080 feet) of anchor chain. Each chain weighs about 25 tons. The rudder is over 25 feet tall and enables the ship to turn in a circle 500 yards in diameter. Total electricity capacity is 7500 kilowatts, a sufficient amount to power a small city.

**COMMANDING OFFICERS  
USS MOUNT WHITNEY (LCC-20)**

1. Captain O.G. Baird, USN, relieved January 5, 1973
2. Captain R.F. Dunn, USN, relieved June 21, 1974
3. Captain L.H. Bibby, USN, relieved June 12, 1976
4. Captain R.M. Burris, USN, relieved September 2, 1977
5. Captain J.J. Kingston, USN, relieved January 26, 1980
6. Captain V.C. Smith, USN, relieved October 10, 1981
7. Captain D.M. Bennett, USN, relieved April 22, 1983
8. Captain R.C. Johnson Jr., USN, Commanding through 1983