

LPD5/02:an  
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From: Commanding Officer  
To: Director of Naval History

Subj: Command History for calendar year 1973; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Chronology for calendar year 1973  
(2) Basic Narrative  
(3) Documentary Annexes

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1), (2) and (3) are submitted.



R. N. CONGDON

Copy to:  
COMPHIBPAC  
COMPHIBRON THREE  
CHINFO

USS OGDEN (LPD 5)  
1973 CHRONOLOGY

JAN

- 01-07 Upkeep Subic Bay
- 06 Backload BLT 3/4 Personnel and Equipment
- 07-09 Enroute to Gulf of Tonkin
- 09 Transferred SRF Subic personnel to USS ORISKANY
- 09-18 ARG Operations Gulf of Tonkin
- 16 Vertrep from USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS 3)
- 17 Unrep from USS PONCHATOULA (AO 148)
- 18-21 Enroute Singapore
- 21 Crossed equator
- 22-25 Inport Singapore
- 26-28 Enroute Subic Bay
- 29-31 Inport Subic Bay
- 30 Offloaded BLT 3/4 personnel and equipment  
Chopped to CTF 78
- 31 Embarked AMCM Unit BRAVO and HM-12 Det B

FEB

- 01-15 Inport Subic Bay
- 01 Conducted MINEX in Subic Bay
- 02 Visit by COMPHIBFORSEVENTHFLT.
- 04 Visit by COMPHIBPAC, COMPHIBFORSEVENTHFLT and COMPHIBRON ONE. Rendered assistance to USS TOLOVANA (AO 64) for fire.
- 05 Visit by COMSEVENTHFLT
- 14 Visit by COMPHIBRON ONE
- 16 ISE in Subic Bay OPAREAS

Enclosure (1)

- 16-19 Inport Subic Bay
- 17 Received annual CMS Inspection
- 20 ISE for Sea Trials in Subic Bay OPAREAS
- 21-23 Enroute to Haiphong Harbor
- 23-28 Anchored in Haiphong Harbor approaches
- 25 Visit by COMINELWARFOR (CTF 78) RADM MCCAULEY
- 26 Unrep from USNS TALUGA (AO 62)
- 28 Enroute to TF 78 holding area in vicinity of Danang

MAR

- 01-02 ISE Danang holding area
- 02 Enroute to Haiphong holding area
- 02-06 Formation steaming in Haiphong holding area
- 04 Vertrep from USS SAN JOSE (AFS 7)
- 05 Unrep to USS TAWASA (ATF 92) and USS CHOWANOC (ATF 100)
- 06-31 Anchored in Haiphong Harbor approaches
- 06 Commenced AMCM operations
- 07 Visit by COMINELWARFOR (CTF 78)
- 08 Unrep from USS CACAPON (AO 52)
- 13 Vertrep from USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS 3)  
Unrep from USS MARIAS (AO 57)
- 14 7000th accident free landing
- 15 Visit by COMOMCOM (CTG 78.1) and DRV observers
- 18 Unrep from USS MARIAS (AO 57)
- 26 Conrep/Vertrep from USS WHITE PLAINS (AFS 4)
- 27 Visit by COMOMCOM

- 28 Unrep from USNS TALUGA (AO 62)
- 29 Visit by COMOMCOM and DRV observers
- 30 Visit by COMINWARFOR and COMOMCOM

APR

- 01-16 Anchored in Haiphong Harbor approaches
- 04 Vertrep from USS SAN JOSE (AFS 7)
- 04-06 Embarked COMPHIBFORSEVENTHFLT Chief of Staff
- 08 Unrep from USS MARIAS (AO 57)
- 12 Visit by COMINWARFOR. Unrep from USS NAVASOTA (AO 106)
- 16-18 Enroute to Hong Kong, B.C.C.
- 17 Unrep from USS PONCHATOULA (AO 148)
- 19-23 Inport Hong Kong
- 24-25 Enroute Subic Bay
- 24 Conducted full power and economy runs
- 26-30 Upkeep Subic Bay

MAY

- 01-09 Inport Subic Bay
- 02 Offloaded HM-12 Det B and AMCM Unit BRAVO
- 08 Onloaded HMH-463 Det D and AMCM Unit DELTA
- 10 ISE Subic Bay
- 11-14 Inport Manila
- 12 Provided fire party to Norwegian freighter SS TAIMYE
- 15 Enroute to Subic Bay
- 16-20 Upkeep Subic Bay
- 18-22 Acted as flagship for COMINWARFOR

21-22 ISE Subic Bay OPAREAS  
23-24 Enroute to Keelung, Taiwan  
25-28 Inport Keelung. SOPA Keelung  
29-30 Enroute to Subic Bay  
31 Inport Subic Bay

JUN

01-06 Upkeep Subic Bay  
07-11 Enroute to Singapore  
12-14 Inport Singapore. Loaded CVA boat pool.  
15-18 Enroute to Gulf of Tonkin  
18-20 Anchored in Haiphong Harbor approaches  
20-26 Anchored in Hon Gai anchorage area. Became MSO support ship.  
22 Visit by COMINELWARFOR  
24 Visit by COMPHIBRON ONE  
26-28 Enroute to Vinh anchorage area  
26 Unrep from USS GUADALUPE (AO 32)  
28-30 Anchored in Vinh anchorage

JUL

01-06 Anchored in Vinh anchorage area  
02 Rescued crew of downed CH-53 helo  
04 With assist of USS GRASP (ARS 24) returned salvaged CH-53 to well deck  
06-09 Underway to evade typhoon ANITA  
08 Passed through eye of typhoon ANITA  
09-18 Anchored at Cua Sot/Hon Matt

- 10 Conrep from USS WHITE PLAINS (AFS 4)  
13 Visit by COMPHIBRON ONE and COMPHIBFORSEVENTHFLT  
17 Visit by COMPHIBRON ONE. Unrep from USS GUADALUPE (AO 32)  
18-20 Enroute to Subic Bay  
20 Onloaded HMH-463 personnel and equipment. Offloaded CVA  
boat pool boats.  
21-31 Enroute to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii  
22 Transited San Bernardino Straits  
27 Chopped to COMTHIRDFLT

AUG

- 01 Inport Pearl Harbor. Offloaded HMH-463.  
01-07 Enroute to San Diego, California  
07-31 Inport San Diego, leave and upkeep period

SEP

- 01-30 Inport San Diego  
01-23 Leave and upkeep period.  
24-30 Readiness Improvement Period  
24 Training Readiness Evaluation by FLTRAGRUPAC

OCT

- 01-31 Inport San Diego. Readiness Improvement Period.  
26 Change of Command.

NOV

- 01-26 Inport San Diego  
06-08 Safety inspection by personnel from Naval Safety Center  
(Norfolk)  
12 Ship's party  
26-30 ISE in SOCAL OPAREAS

DEC

- 01-31 Inport San Diego
- 01-13 Upkeep San Diego
- 04 Medical inspection by PHIBPAC Force Medical Officer
- 05-07 Command Inspection by COMPHIBRON THREE
- 10-12 3-M Assist visit by COMPHIBPAC 3-M Team
- 12 NWA I Assist Visit
- 14-31 Holiday leave period

USS OGDEN (LPD 5)  
1973

Narrative History for the USS OGDEN (LPD 5) for the year 1973.

COMMANDED BY:

R. E. NEIGER, Captain, U. S. Navy  
R. N. CONGDON, Captain, U. S. Navy

01 January - 26 October  
26 October - 31 December

HOMEPORT:

San Diego, California

ASSIGNED TO:

Amphibious Squadron THREE

MISSION:

The mission of the USS OGDEN (LPD 5) is to transport and land troops and their essential equipment and supplies by means of embarked landing craft, amphibian vehicles and helicopter lift.

On January 1, 1973 the USS OGDEN was moored in Subic Bay undergoing a much needed upkeep at the Ship Repair Facility, Subic Bay. Preparations were being made for the backload of BLT 3/4 personnel and equipment and for the return transit to the Gulf of Tonkin. On January 7, the ship got underway with her Marines and a group of SRF personnel who were to be transferred to the USS ORISKANY when the OGDEN arrived in the Gulf. The period from January 9 to January 18 consisted of a reasonably uneventful period of operations as part of Amphibious Ready Group ALFA. Most of the time was spent in the Amphibious Holding Area in the vicinity of Danang. The daily routine was broken only twice with a VERTREP from USS NIAGARA FALLS on January 16 and an UNREP from USS PONCHATOULA on January 17. On January 18, the ready group departed the Gulf on a transit to Singapore for a rest and recreation port visit. The high point of this trip was crossing the equator and the visit of King NEPTUNE and his Royal Court on January 21. The flight deck festivities included the initiation of nearly 800 "pollywogs" into the mysteries of the domain of King NEPTUNE. The ready group anchored in the Man-of-War anchorage in Singapore on January 22. The morning of January 25 brought unexpected orders to get underway and proceed to Subic Bay using "all available speed." This was the first part of the ship's participation in "OPERATION ENDSWEEP." Arrival in Subic Bay on January 29 brought on a flurry of activity to get all of the BLT 3/4 personnel and equipment offloaded prior to the assignment of the ship to Task Force 78. On January 30, the ship

Enclosure (2)

was put under the control of CTF 78 and the onload of elements of the mine-clearance forces was started. The onload of AMCM Unit BRAVO and HM-12 Detachment BRAVO was completed on January 31 and the ship was ready to commence training for her future role as support ship during the mine-clearance operations along the coast of North Vietnam.

The first three weeks of February were spent at anchor in Subic Bay making preparations for departure to the North Vietnamese minefields. Areas in Subic Bay were laid out and OGDEN's helicopters made practice runs through them just as they would be in North Vietnam. On board, the well deck crews and flight deck crews got much needed training in their new jobs. February 16 was spent at sea in the Subic Bay OPAREAS getting the ship back up to a battle ready condition. Primary emphasis was placed on three section watches and precision navigation drills. On return to Subic Bay on the evening of February 16, final loadout was started and the crew was granted some much deserved liberty. February 17 brought the completion of the loadout and a continuation of the liberty break. Also, the ship received its Annual CMS Inspection. OGDEN left Subic Bay for one more day of ISE on February 20. Again, final training was conducted before the transit to the Gulf of Tonkin. On February 21, the ship departed Subic Bay for the transit to Haiphong Harbor. On her arrival in the Haiphong area on February 23, the OGDEN was the first major vessel to transit the swept channel into the Haiphong anchorage area. The only two remaining underway times during the month of February were on February 26 for an UNREP from USNS TALUGA and on February 28 when negotiations at Cat Bi broke down and the entire task force got underway. The destination was the amphibious holding area in the vicinity of Danang.

The ship remained in the Danang holding area until March 2 when she was ordered to another holding area in the vicinity of Haiphong. From March 2 until March 6 OGDEN, along with the rest of Task Force 78, steamed in a holding area in the vicinity of Haiphong while awaiting orders to return to the anchorage area. On the morning of March 6, the negotiations resumed and, once again, OGDEN transitted the swept channel and proceeded to anchorage in the Haiphong area. The ship remained in the anchorage area through the end of March with the exception of six times that she got underway for underway replenishments outside of the anchorage area. During this period, several events of significance occurred. First, on February 14, the ship's Air Department celebrated their 7,000th accident free landing. Other notable occasions included visits from CTF 78 (RADM MCCAULEY) and two visits from representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. These two visits included top ranking officers from DRV military groups and were basically indoctrination tours describing the equipment and proce-

dures used in the mine-clearance operations.

The period from April 1 to April 16 saw a continuation of the mine-clearance operations with OGDEN playing much the same role as support ship for the mine-clearance helicopters. During this period three underway replenishments took place. On April 16, the ship departed the Haiphong area enroute to Hong Kong for a rest and recreation port visit. The transit was uneventful, with OGDEN and other units of Task Force 78 mooring in Hong Kong harbor on the morning of April 19. All units got underway on April 23 for the return transit to Subic Bay and another much needed upkeep period at SRF. This transit did provide OGDEN with the opportunity to conduct both a full power and an economy run. On April 26, the ship berthed at Alava pier and remained there for the remainder of April.

May was probably the most relaxing month of the deployment for the crew of OGDEN. The ship remained in upkeep in Subic Bay until May 10. The major activities during this period included repairs to the ship and the turnover of the AMCM units and helicopter detachments between May 2 and May 8. The new units brought aboard were AMCM Unit DELTA and HMH-463 Detachment DELTA. A one day steaming period for ISE in the Subic Bay OPAREAS on May 10 was followed by a rest and recreation port visit in Manila from May 11 to May 14. On May 12, an emergency request was received from the port authorities to provide a fire fighting team to the Norwegian freighter SS TAIMYE. A chemical fire had broken out in one of their cargo holds and, being an automated ship with a crew of 12, they had no capability of fighting the fire themselves. OGDEN mustered the rescue and assistance party and in a matter of hours the fire was contained with no injuries and virtually no major damage to the TAIMYE. On May 13, the TAIMYE's owner's representative visited the OGDEN and expressed his company's great thanks for the assistance rendered by OGDEN's fire party. On May 15, OGDEN returned to Subic Bay for another upkeep period that lasted until May 21. From May 18 until May 22, the ship was designated as the flagship for COMINELWARFOR. May 21 and 22, were spent at sea in the Subic Bay OPAREAS for ISE. The next trip for the ship was a port visit in Keelung, Taiwan. The transit included May 23 and May 24, with entry into Keelung taking place on May 25. During this inport period OGDEN was SOPA, Keelung. May 29 and May 30 were spent making the return transit to Subic Bay and May 31 was spent inport Subic Bay in upkeep.

The upkeep period which started on May 31 lasted until June 7, when OGDEN got underway for Singapore. The assignment on this trip was to pick up five boats that had been left in Singapore to act as liberty boats for any CVA's that might go there. The

ship arrived in Singapore on June 12 and loaded the boats on June 13. For the second time, the stay in Singapore was cut short as the ship was ordered to sail for Haiphong again for the continuation of the mine-clearance operations. The ship anchored in the area of Hon Gai and was assigned duties as MSO Support Ship along with her other duties as helicopter support ship. During her term with the MSOs OGDEN provided all services that the MSOs could get from a regular tender. Some of these items included; fuel, food, disbursing services, barber services, ship's store use, fresh water, lubricating oil, navigation charts, and a variety of repair work. On June 26, the ship was ordered to the vicinity of Vinh to commence mine-clearance operations in the Vinh/Cua Sot area. These operations continued for the remainder of June.

The period from July 1 to July 6 was spent anchored in the Vinh area. On July 2, one of the mine-clearing helicopters experienced trouble and crashed near the shore in the area of OGDEN. One of OGDEN's boats was immediately dispatched to the crash scene and within minutes the entire four man crew of the helicopter was on the boat and on their way back to OGDEN. The USS GRASP was assigned the job of locating the wreck and, if possible, returning it to OGDEN. On July 4, the wreck was lifted from the bottom and returned to OGDEN's well-deck via one of the ship's M-8 boats. On July 6, due to weather warnings received from FWC Guam, all Task Force 78 units got underway to try to evade typhoon ANITA. After two days of evasion maneuvers, in which OGDEN and her attached MSOs tried to evade the typhoon, ANITA caught the ships and at 0900 on July 8 all of the ships passed through the eye of the typhoon. Just prior to entry into the eye, winds in excess of 65 knots and seas with over 40 foot waves were experienced. After passing through the eye, winds and seas calmed and on July 9 all ships were able to return to the anchorage in the Vinh/Cua Sot area. OGDEN remained anchored in this area until July 18 when she got underway for Subic Bay. On arrival in Subic Bay on July 20, all AMCM units and equipment were offloaded and all of the remaining personnel and equipment of HMH-463 were onloaded for transit to Pearl Harbor. On July 21, the ship departed Subic Bay for the return transit to her homeport of San Diego. She arrived in Pearl Harbor on August 1, after transitting the San Bernardino Straits on July 22 and changing operational control to COMTHIRDFLT on July 27.

August 1 was spent in Pearl Harbor offloading HMH-463 personnel and equipment. The ship departed Pearl Harbor on the night of August 1 for the final leg of her journey home. After ten and one-half months away from her home port of San Diego, OGDEN passed under the Coronado Bay Bridge at 0930 on August 7. The ship immediately went into a leave and upkeep period for the remainder of August.

The month of September was spent inport San Diego with a continuation of the leave and upkeep period lasting until September 23. On September 24, the ship began its Readiness Improvement Period with a Training Readiness Evaluation by FLTRAGRUPAC personnel.

As with September, the entire month of October was spent in San Diego. The main emphasis during this period was spent on the continuation of the Readiness Improvement Program. October 26 brought another change of command to OGDEN as Captain R. E. Neiger was relieved by Captain R. N. Congdon.

The ship remained inport San Diego from November 1 to November 26. The only two notable events during this period were the safety inspection from November 6 to November 8 by personnel from Naval Safety Center (Norfolk) and a ship's party held on November 12. The ship put to sea for an ISE period from November 26 to November 30 to begin retraining the crew in underway evolutions. Most exercises conducted were basic seamanship, flight operations, and gunnery practice.

December was spent inport San Diego. On December 4, a Medical Inspection was held by PHIBPAC Force Medical Officer. From December 5 to December 7 the annual command inspection was held by COMPHIBRON THREE. A 3-M Assist Visit was held by the COMPHIBPAC 3-M Team from December 10 to December 12. Finally, on December 12, an NWA I Assist Visit was conducted. The year finished for OGDEN with the holiday leave period commencing on December 14 and continuing until December 31.