From: Commanding Officer, USS SAIPAN (LHA 2)  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2), Navy Department, Washington, D.C.  

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY, 1985 (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)  

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C  

Encl: (1) Command History, 1985 (OPNAV Report 5750-1)  
(2) Copy of Captain C. V. Lind's Biography  
(3) Operation Helping Hand  
(4) Distant Hammer  
(5) DOD Show "Mass Ave"  
(6) 25,000th Landing  
(7) Change of Command  
(8) April 1985 Issue of Seafarer (Ship's Family-gram)  
(9) July 1985 Issue of Seafarer (Ship's Family-gram)  

1. As per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (9) are forwarded.

C. V. LIND, JR.

Copy to:  
Director Naval History (OP-09BH)  
COMPHIBGRU TWO (w/o encls)
COMMAND HISTORY
USS SAIPAN (LHA 2)
1JAN85-31DEC85

1. Command Organization

a. Commanding Officer.
   Captain Ward L. West, USN (14SEP84 - 13DEC85)
   Captain Carl V. Lind, Jr., USN, (13DEC85 - Present)

b. Mission. To embark, deploy and land elements of a Marine
   Amphibious Landing Force in an assault by helicopters, landing
   craft, amphibious vehicles, or by a combination of all three
   methods. Evacuation and disaster relief is a secondary mission
   of SAIPAN.

c. Composition of Command. SAIPAN's enlisted Navy crew
   strength is 837 men. In addition, there are 60 officers.
   Carrying components of several different Marine Corps Commands,
   SAIPAN carries 1,730 troops and 172 embarked officers when combat
   loaded.

d. Units Embarked.

   (1) MARG 1-85 (22JAN - 9AUG)
   (a) Commander Amphibious Squadron Eight
   (b) 24th Marine Amphibious Unit
   (c) Battalion Landing Team 2/8
   (d) Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 162
   (e) Assault Craft Unit Two
   (f) Tactical Air Control Squadron 21
   (g) Surgical Group One and Two


   1-22 January
   Inport Naval Station Norfolk, VA.
   Starboard side to Berth #1.

   22-23 January
   Underway enroute Moorehead City, NC
   with USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY,
   USS NASHVILLE; OTC: COMPHIBRON EIGHT;
   anchored LA-1 Lynnhaven for ACU-2 boat
   onload.

   23-25 January
   Anchored, Moorehead City, NC onload,
   24 MAU and equipment.

   25-31 January
   Enroute Rota, Spain to assume duties as
   CTU 61.1.1; MARG 1-85 to relieve
   USS INCHON and other units of
   MARG 3-84.

Encl (1)
Summary of Operations (cont').

1-4 February
Enroute Rota, Spain Conducting tactical drills IAW OP Order 2000 and MARG 1-85 Yellow Pages.

4-5 February
Anchored Rota, Spain.

5 February
Enroute Naval Station Rota, Spain, Berth 2, Pier 3.

5-6 February
Moored starboard side to Berth 2, Pier 3 Naval Station, Rota, Spain.

6 February
Enroute anchorage Rota, Spain.

6 February
Anchored Rota, Spain.

6-7 February
Enroute anchorage Sierra De Retin for a combined forces beach assault.

7-12 February
Anchored off the coast of Sierra De Retin, Spain. Conducting Multi-Phased Amphibious Operations.

13-14 February
Enroute Malaga, Spain; detached USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY and USS NASHVILLE.

14-15 February
Anchored Malaga, Spain.

15 February
Enroute pierside Malaga, Spain.

15-25 February
Moored starboard side to Malaga, Spain.

25 February-1 March
Enroute Valencia, Spain.

1-8 March
Moored Valencia, Spain.

8-11 March
Enroute Augusta Bay, Sicily for first phase of "SARDINIA 85". Regrouped with USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY and USS NASHVILLE.

11-13 March
Anchored Augusta Bay, Sicily preparing for transit of "Strait of Messina" and exercise "SARDINIA 85".

13-16 March
Enroute Capo Teulada, Sardinia; transited "Strait of Messina"; conducted AAW/ASW drills.

16 March
Visit by VADM Kelso, Commander Sixth Fleet.
Summary of Operations (con't).

16-21 March
Anchored Capo Teulada, Sardinia; started water and helo borne offload of Marines and equipment for exercise "SARDINIA 85"; started onload of troops and equipment. Conducted live NGFS.

19 March
Underway replenishment with USS SAVANAH.

20 March
Conducted NGFS at Capo Teulada.

21-25 March
Enroute Marseilles, France.

23 March
Vertical replenishment with USS CONCORD.

24 March
"Steel Beach" Picnic and Talent Show.

25 March -13 April
Moored starboard side to pier, Marseilles, France.

27 March
RADM Vion of the French Navy was aboard for an official visit.

14-15 April
Enroute Livorno, Italy.

15-20 April
Anchored Livorno, Italy.

20-23 April
Enroute Naples, Italy; underway replenishment with USNS NEOSHO, USS CONCORD, USNS RIGEL.

23 April-4 May
Anchored Naples, Italy.

29 April
U.S. Marine Corp presented a marble plaque to town officials from the Italian village, Digioiosa Jonica.

4-5 May
Enroute Capo Teulada, Sardinia to participate in exercise "DISTANT HAMMER 85".

5-8 May
Anchored Capo Teulada, Sardinia; exercise "DISTANT HAMMER 85" phase one: amphibious assault, conducted live NGFS.

8-16 May
Enroute Trieste, Italy; phase two "DISTANT HAMMER 85"; transited "Straits of Messina"; AAW/ASW operational exercises; transited Adriatic Sea; underway replenishment with USS CONCORD.
Summary of Operations (con't).

16-24 May  Moored starboard side to Pier 4, Trieste, Italy.

24-27 May  Enroute Torre Veniere; underway replenishment with USNS NEOSHO, USNS TRUCKEE.

26 May  25,000 Flight Deck landing by LTCOL Karamarkovich, USMC, and Capt Ward L. West, USN.

27 May-3 June  Anchored training anchorage Torre Veniere; DOD Show "Mass Ave".

28 May  Visit by Fleet Marine Force Atlantic, LTGEN GRAY, USMC.

2 June  "Steel Beach" Picnic.

3-7 June  Enroute Pianne De Spille, Italy.

7-10 June  Anchored, training anchorage Pianne Di Spille, Italy.

8 June  VADM Kelso aboard to observe non-combatant evacuation operation drill.

11-13 June  Enroute Benidorm, Spain. Vertrep/Conrep with USS SYLVANIA and fueling at sea USNS NEOSHO.

13-15 June  Anchored, Benidorm, Spain; general recall to get underway due to hijacking of TWA flight 847.

16-18 June  Enroute Algeria; steamed off coast of Algeria; awaiting USS SPARTANBURG, USS NASHVILLE to join up.

18-22 June  Enroute Eastern Mediterranean for contingency operations; enroute Sicily for helo return of personnel left behind in Benidorm.

24 June  Refuel/Vertrep with USS KALAMAZOO.

28 June  Vertrep with USS SYLVANIA.
Summary of Operations (con't).

22 June-14 July  Enroute "Beirut coast for contingency operations; conducted flight operations; steamed with USS NIMITZ Battle Group; prepared for non-combatant evacuation (NEO) operations; hostages released and transported via auto to Damascus and flown to Rhein-Main, Frankfort, Germany; underway replenishment with USS NITRO; underway replenishment with USNS NEOSHO; underway replenishment with USNS SIRIUS.

4 July  21 Gun Salute; "Steel Beach" Picnic.

5 July  Conrep USS NITRO, Vertrep with USS SYLVANIA.

7 July  Refuel with USNS NEOSHO.

12 July  Vertrep with USNS SIRIUS.

14-18 July  Enroute Morocco for Moroccan PHIBEX; detached by CTF-60; under tactical control of CTF-61; fired 5"/54, CIWS, SRBOC.

18-19 July  Conducted turn over off coast of Sicily with MARG 2-85, USS GUAM flagship.

19-20 July  Underway replenishment with USNS TRUCKEE.

20-24 July  Anchored Moroccan Coast, anchorage LA-1, Baie Betoya, Morocco; Moroccan PHIBEX.

24-25 July  Enroute Rota, Spain; transited "Strait of Gibraltar".

25-29 July  Moored Pier 1, Berth 1, Rota, Spain; vehicle offload for washdown.

29 July-7 August  Enroute Onslow Beach, NC; vehicle offload.

7-8 August  Enroute Morehead City, NC for personnel offload.
Summary of Operations (con't).

8 August
Anchored Morehead City, NC; Marine's and equipment offload. Friends and dependents embarked for "Tiger Cruise".

8-9 August
Enroute Naval Station Norfolk, VA; anchored LA-1 for LCU/LCM-8 offload. COMNAVSURFLANT, VADM McCauley; Commander Amphibious Group Two, RADM Rogers; Commander Amphibious Squadron Twelve, Capt Briggs flew on board to welcome SAIPAN home.

9 August-24 September
Moored Pier 5, Berth 2, Naval Station, Norfolk, VA. COMPHIBRON EIGHT departed; COMPHIBRON SIX embarked.

16 August
COMPHIBRON EIGHT Change of Command; Captain Charles G. Felkins, USN was relieved by Captain Judson H. Springer, USN.

25-27 September
Enroute ModLoc for hurricane Sortie. Hurricane GLORIA.

27 September
Enroute VACAPES.

28 September
Anchored Yankee Anchorage.

29 September
Enroute Whiskey Anchorage for ammo offload.

29 September-2 October
Anchored Whiskey Anchorage; ammo offload.

2 October
Enroute Craney Island for fuel offload.

2-3 October
Moored starboard side to Pier D, Berth 1, Craney Island; commenced fuel offload.

3 October
Enroute Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, VA.

3 October
Moored Slip 3 Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, VA.

3 October-31 December
Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, VA; ship's restricted availability.
Summary of Operations (con't).

13 December Change of Command Ceremony; Captain Ward L. West, USN, was relieved by Captain Carl V. Lind, Jr., USN.


Miles Steamed: 32,807.1
Aircraft Landings: (day) 6,805 (night) 1,107
Aircraft Embarked: 4 - CH-530
12 - CH-46E
4 - AH-1T
3 - UH-1N
23 - TOTAL
Vehicles Embarked: 198 TOTAL

4. Significant Events.

a. USS SAIPAN received the Battle Efficiency "E" Award. The award encompasses the competitive cycle 1 Oct 1983 to 31 March 1985 as announced by COMNAVSURFLANT message 242337Z May 1985. The Battle "E" is presented for satisfactory completion of various exercises and operational tasks, as well as outstanding day to day performance. Departmental awards were presented to: CIC, Engineering, Damage Control, Air Department, Amphibious Assault and Electronic Warfare.

b. USS SAIPAN received the first "Bronze Anchor Award" presented by Captain S.R. Briggs, Commander Amphibious Squadron Twelve. This is given to the unit in the squadron with the best record of achieving/surpassing their retention goals.

c. USS SAIPAN captured their third straight "Captain's Cup Award" for Large Units Afloat. The "Captain's Cup" is a trophy awarded to the command which compiles the most points while competing in a wide variety of athletic events.

d. Captain Carl V. Lind, Jr., USN, relieved Captain Ward L. West, USN, as SAIPAN's Commanding Officer on 13 December 1985. Rear Admiral R.B. Rogers, USN, Commander Amphibious Group TWO was the guest speaker.