



2008/8/94

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS VALLEY FORGE (CG 50)
FPO AP 96682-1170

5750
Ser Admin/101
28JUL94

From: Commanding Officer, USS VALLEY FORGE (CG 50)
To: Director of Naval History (OP 09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) Ship's Chronology 1993
(2) Command Composition and Organization
(3) Narrative Summary
(4) Commanding Officer's Photograph
(5) Commanding Officer's Biography
(6) Executive Officer's Biography
(7) Joint Meritorious Unit Award Message
(8) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
(9) Change of Command Program

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (9) are submitted.


R. JAMES ABBOTT

Ship's Chronology 1993

01 - 03 JAN	Port visit - Fremantle, Australia
03 - 09 JAN	Underway - en route Sydney, Australia
09 - 13 JAN	Port visit - Sydney, Australia
13 - 25 JAN	Underway - en route Pearl Harbor, HI
21 JAN	Chop to COMTHIRDFLT
23 - 25 JAN	Inport - Pearl Harbor, HI
25 - 31 JAN	Underway - en route San Diego
31 JAN	Completion of Western Pacific/Arabian Gulf/Indian Ocean deployment
31 JAN - 04 MAR	Inport - San Diego, CA Post-deployment leave and upkeep
04 - 11 MAR	Underway - SOCAL OPS
11 MAR - 02 APR	Inport - San Diego, CA
02 - 12 APR	Underway - en route Rodman, Panama Start counter-narcotics Operations; embark Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) for launch from forecastle
12 APR	Inport - Rodman, Panama; brief stop for fuel
12 - 27 APR	Underway - counter-narcotic patrols
22 APR	Seizure of MV Sea Chariot
27 - 30 APR	Port visit - Rodman, PA
30 APR - 14 MAY	Underway - counter-narcotic patrols
05 MAY	Commander, Task Group Four Point One, Rear Admiral Duhr, USN, visits
14 MAY	Inport - Rodman, Panama; brief stop for fuel
14 - 18 MAY	Underway - en route Acapulco, Mexico
18 - 21 MAY	Port visit - Acapulco, Mexico; anchored
21 - 26 MAY	Underway - en route San Diego, CA
26 MAY - 28 JUN	Inport - San Diego, CA
30 MAY	Debark Rigid Inflatable Boat
25 JUN	Change of Command - Captain R. James Abbott relieves Captain B. Cornett, II
28 JUN - 02 JUL	Underway - SOCAL OPS; FLEETEX 93-1M
02 - 12 JUL	Inport - San Diego, CA
12 - 16 JUL	Underway - en route Vancouver, B.C.
16 - 20 JUL	Port visit - Vancouver, B.C.; anchored
20 JUL	Underway - en route Nanoose, B.C.
20 - 23 JUL	Underway - vicinity of Nanoose Underwater Test Range for CNO Project 371; evenings inport Nanoose, B.C.
23 - 30 JUL	Underway - en route San Diego, CA
30 JUL - 23 AUG	Inport - San Diego, CA
13 AUG	Awarded Joint Meritorious Unit Award
23 AUG	Underway - dead stick move to Southwest Marine Shipyard, San Diego, CA; commence Regular Overhaul (ROH-1)
03 SEP	Drydocking; Southwest Marine Shipyard, San Diego, CA
23 NOV	Undocking
- 31 DEC	Regular Overhaul continues

Command Composition and Organization

USS VALLEY FORGE (CG 50) was commissioned on 11 January 1986 as the fourth Ticonderoga Class (CG 47) AEGIS guided missile cruiser. Designed to lead the surface forces of the 21st century, VALLEY FORGE possesses a potent array of air, surface, and subsurface capabilities. The MK 7 AEGIS Weapons System, the world's most capable shipboard air defense and missile system, enables VALLEY FORGE to carry out her primary mission of protecting units of a carrier battle group in various threat environments.

During 1993, USS VALLEY FORGE was homeported in San Diego, CA and assigned to Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group One (Rear Admiral Hancock) as immediate superior in command. The ship's type commander was Commander, Naval Surface Forces, United States Pacific Fleet. The Commanding Officer was Captain Billy Cornett, II until 25 June 1993 when he was relieved by Captain R. James Abbott. The Executive Officer was Lieutenant Commander Alvin R. Smith until 25 August 1993 when he was relieved by Lieutenant Commander Richard A. Lepper. Ship's company consisted of 30 officers and 365 crew members. The command has five departments: Operations, Engineering, Supply, Combat Systems, and Weapons. Until 01 February 1993, the ship had an Air Department, the Saberhawks of HSL-47, under the leadership of Lieutenant Commander Jim Gilcrest. The Air Department consisted of two LAMPS MK III aircraft, Saberhawk 63 and 65, 6 officers, and 16 enlisted. A detachment from HSL-47 was also embarked for counter-narcotic operations from 31 March to 26 May. The Officer-in-Charge was Lieutenant Commander Steve O'Day. The detachment consisted of two LAMPS MK III aircraft, Saberhawk 63 and 65, 6 officers, and 17 enlisted.

VALLEY FORGE began 1993 on deployment under the operational and tactical control of Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group One as part of Battle Group Alpha. Battle Group Alpha consisted of USS VALLEY FORGE (CG 50), USS RANGER (CV 61), USS CHOSIN (CG 62), USS KINKAID (DD 965), USS KIRK (FF 1087), USS WABASH (AOR 5), and USS MAUNA KEA (AOE 22). VALLEY FORGE served as the battle group Anti-Air Warfare Commander and Link 11 Coordinator.

VALLEY FORGE was under the tactical control of Commander, Joint Task Force Five (CJTTF 5) from 02 April 1993 to 07 April 1993 during her transit to the Eastern Pacific counter-narcotics operating area. VALLEY FORGE then came under the tactical control of Commander, Task Group Four Point One (CTG 4.1) and was assigned under the overall operational control of Commander, Joint Task Force Four (CJTTF 4). VALLEY FORGE was assigned to CJTTF 5 from 12 May 1993 to 26 May 1993 on her transit to San Diego. VALLEY FORGE operated in the Eastern Pacific during the period 02 April 1993 to 26 May 1993 to monitor and interdict surface and air shipments of narcotics. USS CLEVELAND (LPD 7) was briefly under tactical control of VALLEY FORGE during the period of 22-23 April 1993.

During FLEETEX 93-1M on 31 July, VALLEY FORGE was under the tactical control of Commander, Amphibious Squadron Five and acted as the Amphibious Operating Area (AOA) Anti-Air Warfare Commander.

VALLEY FORGE conducted independent operations in July en route to Vancouver, B.C. and during CNO Special Project 371 in the vicinity of Nanoose, B.C. VALLEY FORGE returned to port on 30 July.

For the remainder of 1993, VALLEY FORGE was assigned to Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group One.

Narrative Summary

USS VALLEY FORGE began 1993 in Fremantle, Australia with one month remaining on her six month deployment. The ship had just completed duties as Air Defense Zone Coordinator, Anti-Air Warfare Commander, and primary naval gunfire support ship for Operation Restore Hope off the coast of Somalia. Greeted by a friendly crowd waving American flags, the crew enjoyed a five day port visit to Fremantle. After a seven day transit along the southern coast of Australia, VALLEY FORGE moored at an Australian Navy pier in the heart of Sydney, Australia on 09 January. Units in company were USS RANGER (CV 61), USS CHOSIN (CG 62), USS WABASH (AOR 5), and USS MAUNA KEA (AE 22). With the world famous Sydney Opera House in the background, the officers of VALLEY FORGE enjoyed a sunset reception on board USS RANGER hosted by Rear Admiral Hancock, Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group One. Numerous Australian politicians, businessmen, and military officers were in attendance. The ship left Sydney on 13 January en route Pearl Harbor.

The primary reason for stopping in Pearl Harbor on 23 January was to embark crew members' fathers, brothers, uncles, and sons for a traditional Tiger Cruise back to San Diego. A day out of Pearl Harbor, the "Tigers" were treated to a Sea Power Demonstration involving USS RANGER and her air wing, USS WABASH, USS KINKAID, and USS MAUNA KEA. The Sea Power Demonstration featured low altitude aircraft flybys, 5" and CIWS gun shoots, and a tactical maneuvering exercise in which VALLEY FORGE executed a full rudder flank three turn to take station alongside USS RANGER's port beam at 300 yards. Our guests were truly impressed with the demonstration and the rest of the transit to San Diego.

On 31 January, VALLEY FORGE returned home to San Diego and was greeted on the pier by hundreds of friends and family. This marked the successful completion of a six month deployment that spanned the Western Pacific, Arabian Gulf, and Indian Ocean. In addition to her significant contributions to Operation Southern Watch and Operation Restore Hope, VALLEY FORGE was proud to have returned to San Diego with the most important achievement of all, a perfect safety record. The month of February was spent in a well-deserved stand down period.

During the period 04 to 11 March, VALLEY FORGE conducted a variety of events in the Southern California (SOCAL) operating area. The ship steamed in rescue station while the USS RANGER conducted her final series of flight operations before decommissioning. VALLEY FORGE fired her 5"/54 caliber gun mounts at San Clemente Island in a naval gunfire support exercise, directed the launch of one MK 46 torpedo from a LAMPS MK III helicopter, and fired one over-the-side MK 46 torpedo. The ship also ran the Surface Ship Radiated Noise Measurement (SSRNM) range in order to establish an acoustic baseline prior to regular overhaul (ROH). The outstanding performance of VALLEY FORGE

during these diverse operations, held shortly after deployment, was a testament to the crew's intense pride and motivation.

On 02 April, VALLEY FORGE left San Diego to conduct extended counter-narcotics operations for the second time in her history. The ship's mission was twofold. First, to track and report air contacts suspected of narcotics smuggling using the three dimensional SPY radar. Secondly, the ship served as part of a coordinated air surveillance network that included the U.S. Air Force, Coast Guard, Drug Enforcement Agency, and Customs Department. VALLEY FORGE was also assigned to conduct maritime surveillance, reporting, and interdiction. A Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) consisting of one officer and four enlisted was embarked. Coast Guard personnel were responsible for boarding, search, and seizure of suspect vessels.

The crew adapted well to this new mission and took an exceptionally aggressive approach to counter-narcotics operations. Several conditions of readiness tailored to law enforcement were implemented and watch teams in CIC were augmented with a Tactical Information Officer to organize and evaluate the vast amount of counter-narcotics intelligence received. To become better equipped for counter-narcotics operations, a Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) was rigged on the forecastle for launch using the torpedo handling boom. Over the course of several drills the ship became proficient in launching the RIB in under five minutes. This practice paid off in subsequent day and night boarding operations.

After a brief stop for fuel at Naval Station Rodman, Panama on 12 April, the ship headed south for patrols in the vicinity of Malpelo Island, a small parcel of Colombian territory in the Eastern Pacific. VALLEY FORGE participated in several successful air interdictions. However, the crew never had the chance to see, except on radar, the ultimate "bust" of the drug smugglers.

This opportunity finally came on 22 April when VALLEY FORGE came upon the Motor Vessel Sea Chariot approximately 250 miles west of Colombia. MV Sea Chariot was a 225 foot coastal freighter registered to a small Caribbean nation. With Saberhawk 63 deployed ahead and filming the MV Sea Chariot, VALLEY FORGE steamed over the horizon at thirty knots and took position 500 yards astern of the vessel. After initial questioning over bridge-to-bridge radio, the LEDET boarded MV Sea Chariot at the direction of Commander, Joint Task Force Four (CJTF 4). Later that day, an estimated five tons of cocaine was discovered in four steel cargo containers on deck. The USS CLEVELAND arrived on scene and eventually escorted MV Sea Chariot with the VALLEY FORGE LEDET on board through the Panama Canal to Miami. VALLEY FORGE was commended by CJTF 4 for her flawless performance in the seizure of MV Sea Chariot, the second largest interdiction of cocaine in the history of the war on drugs. On 23 April, the ship resumed patrols in her assigned operating area.

After a four day port visit, VALLEY FORGE departed Rodman, Panama on 30 April. Commander, Task Group Four Point One (CTG 4.1), Rear Admiral Duhr, came aboard by personnel highline from the USS MISSISSIPPI on 05 May to see firsthand how VALLEY FORGE was managing the counter-narcotic mission. He was briefed on the innovative configuration in CIC to rapidly respond to air and surface targets of interest and inspected the RIB on the forecastle. VALLEY FORGE continued patrols in the vicinity of Malpelo Island as MISSISSIPPI headed north through the Panama Canal with CTG 4.1 embarked.

VALLEY FORGE enjoyed a port visit in Acapulco, Mexico from 18 to 21 May. While at anchor, the Commanding Officer made calls on the Mayor and the Commander of the Mexican Naval Station at Acapulco. VALLEY FORGE returned to San Diego on 26 May 1993.

On 25 June, Captain Billy Cornett, II was relieved by Captain R. James Abbott in a ceremony held at Naval Station Pier Two.

VALLEY FORGE got underway on the Monday following the Change of Command for a week at sea that included an ASW tracking exercise and participation in FLEETEX 93-1M. In the ASW tracking exercise, VALLEY FORGE detected a Pacific Fleet SSN attempting to avoid detection and pass through a pre-designated area. VALLEY FORGE practiced ASW search procedures, tracking, evasive steering, and simulated weapons engagement. During FLEETEX 93-1M, the ship served as the Amphibious Operating Area Anti-Air Warfare Commander for Commander, Amphibious Squadron Five, a role that the ship had excelled at during Operation Restore Hope. The exercise culminated with VALLEY FORGE providing air coverage and control for an amphibious landing on the beaches of Camp Pendleton. Ships in company were USS CAYUGA (LST 1186), USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH 11), and USS ACADIA (AD 42). Midshipman training and pre-ROH testing was also conducted during this week underway.

On 12 July, VALLEY FORGE got underway for Vancouver, B.C. and subsequent operations on the Nanoose Underwater Test Range in support of CNO Special Project 371. Midshipmen First and Second Class were embarked for training. The ship spent four days at anchor in the western portion of Vancouver Harbor and the crew enjoyed full liberty. On 20 July, VALLEY FORGE navigated the Straits of Georgia to the Nanoose Underwater Test Range, a joint U.S./Canadian facility off Vancouver Island. For the next three days, the ship operated on the range during the day and spent evenings pierside. The purpose of CNO Special Project 371 was to test telemetry equipment on the Anti-submarine Rocket (ASROC). Five ASROCs were fired and evaluated. In another exercise, a version of the MK 48 advanced capability torpedo was launched at VALLEY FORGE and evaluated. Between missile shots, the Navigator took advantage of the precise range navigation system to measure the ship's tactical diameter at various speeds. VALLEY FORGE successfully completed all events in Nanoose and was praised by range personnel for her proficiency and professionalism.

The ship conducted a complete ammunition offload at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, CA on 28 and 29 April in preparation for ROH. This strenuous offload was completed on time and without incident.

After returning to San Diego on 30 July, VALLEY FORGE spent the next three weeks gearing up for Regular Overhaul (ROH). An ROH organization was put in place with the Chief Engineer, LCDR [REDACTED], as ROH Coordinator and the Fire Control Officer, LT [REDACTED], as the Assistant ROH Coordinator. Several Tiger Teams were formed across divisional lines for painting, lagging, and PRC deck repair. A major task during August was the offload and storage of supplies, equipage, and equipment from the ship. Defueling and offload of all flammable liquids also occurred at this time. The Captain's Gig was taken to Naval Amphibious Base Coronado for a complete overhaul and the motor whaleboat was placed in storage.

On 23 August, VALLEY FORGE was moved to Pier Three at Southwest Marine Shipyard for the start of an eight month overhaul, the first in the ship's history. Southwest Marine Shipyard is situated just south of the Coronado Bay Bridge in San Diego. Teamwork among VALLEY FORGE, SUPSHIP, Southwest Marine, PMS-400, and a variety of outside contractors was stressed from the beginning of ROH at weekly meetings and ship-sponsored cookouts.

A Berthing Barge (PL4) was tied along the starboard side. Within a week of arriving at Southwest Marine, all messing, berthing, and office facilities had been transferred from VALLEY FORGE to the barge. Living conditions on the barge were cramped but the crew made the best of it.

During the first two months of ROH, safety and the tracking of shipyard and ship's force work were constant challenges. Shipyard safety had been addressed in a pre-ROH safety stand down and was emphasized by the chain of command from the top down. A daily safety walkthrough was conducted at 0900 by the SUPSHIP safety representative and a VALLEY FORGE officer. The entire crew was issued hard hats and coveralls. When concern developed over the large number of paint samples taken by Southwest Marine (approximately 600) that tested positive for heavy metals, the ship's respiratory protection program was augmented by a paint sampling procedure to ensure that hazardous areas were identified. Outside assistance in this area was provided by Navy Environmental Protection Mobile Unit Five.

A Project Management Office (PMO) was established to make the task of tracking and integrating ship's force and shipyard work more efficient. PMO was formed as a separate office with new computers and commercially available software. Training was conducted at the Division Officer and Chief Petty Officer level on project management theory, specifically the critical path method and Planning Evaluation Review Technique (PERT). The Captain's initiative to apply project management techniques to

the shipboard environment was intended to move supervisors toward systematic long range planning that took into account competing resources and shipwide relationships between tasks. It was an effort to avoid crisis planning and provide all levels of the chain of command a tool to track a heavy workload during and after ROH. Ship's force and shipyard work was planned, integrated, and tracked through various computer generated PERT charts developed with the assistance of the PMO. PERT was also applied to shipwide inspections and certifications. Projects such as making a case for the early light off of a generator and coordinating the spray painting and deck repair of over 200 spaces proved the utility of this new method.

The first major milestone of ROH, undocking, was achieved on time on 23 November. The ship left the drydock with a fresh coat of paint, reworked shafting, and one new CRP propeller.

ROH continued into the winter of 1993. The crew of VALLEY FORGE enjoyed two two-week leave periods during the Christmas holidays.

The year ended with VALLEY FORGE continuing overhaul at Southwest Marine Shipyard with all critical path milestones having been met.

RICHARD A. LEPPER
LIEUTENANT COMMANDER
UNITED STATES NAVY

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER RICHARD ALLEN LEPPER, A NATIVE OF THE EASTERN TIME ZONE, WAS BORN IN [REDACTED] HE ENLISTED IN THE NAVY IN JUNE 1974 AND ENTERED THE NAVAL ACADEMY PREPARATORY SCHOOL (NAPS) IN NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND. UPON GRADUATION HE SEPARATED FROM THE NAVY TO ATTEND SCHOOL AT WESLEY COLLEGE IN DOVER, DELAWARE. HE REENTERED THE NAVY IN 1976 AND GRADUATED FROM THE NAVAL ACADEMY IN MAY 1980 WITH A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE.

FOLLOWING COMMISSIONING, ENSIGN LEPPER WAS TEMPORARILY ASSIGNED DUTIES AT THE NAVAL ACADEMY WHERE HE HELPED WITH THE INDOCTRINATION OF THE CLASS OF 1984. UPON COMPLETION OF THESE DUTIES, HE ATTENDED SURFACE WARFARE OFFICER SCHOOL IN SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA AND REPORTED FOR DUTY IN USS GOLDSBOROUGH (DDG 20) IN MAY 1981 AT PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII. AFTER SERVING AS ELECTRICAL OFFICER AND COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER OFFICER LIEUTENANT LEPPER WAS TRANSFERRED TO USS FOX (CG 30) IN OCTOBER 1983. WHILE IN FOX, HE SERVED AS GUNNERY OFFICER, FIRE CONTROL OFFICER AND DAMAGE CONTROL ASSISTANT.

LIEUTENANT LEPPER ATTENDED DEPARTMENT HEAD SCHOOL IN NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND IN APRIL 1986 AND REPORTED ABOARD USS ALBERT DAVID (FF 1050) IN DECEMBER 1986 SERVING AS WEAPONS OFFICER AND OPERATIONS OFFICER. HE TRANSFERRED IN JULY 1988 TO USS TEXAS (CGN 39) WHERE HE SERVED AS COMBAT SYSTEMS OFFICER.

WITH AN EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND IN PACIFIC FLEET OPERATIONS AND SURFACE WARFARE, LIEUTENANT COMMANDER LEPPER REPORTED TO COMMANDER NAVAL SURFACE FORCES, UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET TO SERVE AS THE FORCE ANTI-AIR WARFARE OFFICER IN SEPTEMBER 1990.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER LEPPER REPORTED TO USS VALLEY FORGE (CG 50) EXECUTIVE OFFICER IN JULY 1993 AFTER ATTENDANCE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER COURSE IN NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER LEPPER'S DECORATIONS AND AWARDS INCLUDE; TWO NAVY COMMENDATION MEDALS, NAVY MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION AWARD, NATIONAL DEFENSE MEDAL, SEA SERVICE DEPLOYMENT RIBBON WITH ONE STAR, MARKSMANSHIP AWARD FOR THE RIFLE AND EXPERT MARKSMANSHIP AWARD FOR THE PISTOL.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER LEPPER IS UNMARRIED AND RESIDES IN SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA.

Enclosure (6)

ADMINISTRATIVE MESSAGE

ROUTINE

R 132206Z AUG 93 ZYB PSN 977624535

FM COMCRUDESGRU ONE

TO COMCARAIRWING TWO
USS VALLEY FORGE
HELSUPPRON ELEVEN

COMDESRON SEVEN
HSL FOUR SEVEN NORTH ISLAND
USS WABASH

BT
UNCLAS NO1650

MSGID/GENADMIN/COMCRUDESGRUONE//
SUBJ/JOINT MERITORIOUS UNIT AWARD/
REF/A/DOC, JOINT STAFF/29JUN93//
AMPN/MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS OP-09B33. AWARDING THE JMUA TO
THE UNIFIED TASK FORCE/SOMALIA//
RMKS/1. THE JOINT STAFF, WASH. DC UNDER REF A HAS APPROVED THE JMUA FOR
EXCEPTIONALLY MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT BY THE UNIFIED TASK FORCE SOMALIA FROM
05DEC92 TO 04NAY93.

2. IAW REF A. THE FOLLOWING RANGER BATTLE GROUP UNITS ARE AUTHORIZED TO WEAR
THE JMUA:

COMCRUDESGRU ONE
COMDESRON SEVEN
COMCARAIRWING TWO
CARRIER AIR WING TWO
USS RANGER
HSL FOUR SEVEN
HELSUPPRON ELEVEN
USS WABASH
USS VALLEY FORGE

3. PERSONNEL PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE AUTHORIZED UNITS DURING THE
OPERATION AND TAD PERSONNEL WHO CONTRIBUTED DIRECTLY TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE
JMUA ARE ELIGIBLE.

4. A COPY OF THE APPROVED CITATION WILL BE FWD UNDER SEPCOR.

DLVR: USS VALLEY FORGE

977624/4969/225 01 OF 01 M3 0076 025/00:56Z 132206Z AUG
OSN: RXXAO089 COMCRUDESGRU ONE

Enclosure (7)