



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS VALLEY FORGE (CG 50)

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From: Commanding Officer, USS VALLEY FORGE (CG-50)

To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization

(2) 1997 Chronology

(3) Narrative Summary

(4) Supporting Documents

1. Enclosures (1) through (4) are forwarded in accordance with reference (a).

WILLIAM P. HOKER

Copy to:

COMDESRON TWENTY-ONE

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

**COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION:**

A. Mission: The mission of USS VALLEY FORGE (CG-50) is to complement the fleet's ability to keep the world's sea lanes open, and free, and to provide for in-depth protection of military and merchant shipping, underway logistics groups, amphibious forces and battle groups. To achieve this the ship has been specifically designed to simultaneously counter threats posed by air, surface and subsurface threats.

B. Unit Commander:  
(COMDESRON TWENTY-ONE)  
CAPT Slattery 01 JAN - 31 DEC

C. Units under VALLEY FORGE's operational control:  
None

D. Commanding Officer:  
CDR W. James Kear 01 JAN - 07 NOV  
CDR William P. Hoker 07 NOV - 31 DEC

E. Executive Officer:  
LCDR D. C. Hulse 01 JAN - 22 SEP  
LCDR David Melin 22 SEP - 31 DEC

F. Homeport:  
San Diego, California

G. Aircraft Assigned:  
HSL-43 Sabrehawks 01 JAN - 12 FEB  
Two Lamps Mk III (SH-60B) Helicopters

Encl (1)

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

1997 CHRONOLOGY

January

01-31 Western Pacific and Arabian Gulf Deployment  
01-06 Underway-Transit to Bali, Indonesia  
02 Replenishment at Sea (RAS) with USNS YUKON  
03 Crossing the Equator/Shellback Ceremony  
06 RAS with USNS YUKON  
07-09 Anchored-Bali, Indonesia  
10-13 Underway-Transit to Australia  
14-16 Moored-Fremantle, Australia  
17-21 Underway-Transit to Sydney, Australia  
22-24 Moored-Sydney, Australia  
25-26 Underway-Transit to New Caledonia  
27 Moored-New Caledonia  
28-31 Underway-Transit to Pearl Harbor, HI

February

01-12 Western Pacific and Arabian Gulf Deployment  
01-04 Underway-Transit to Pearl Harbor, HI  
05 Moored-Pearl Harbor, HI  
06-11 Underway-Transit to San Diego, CA  
Tiger Cruise  
12 Homecoming-San Diego, CA

Encl (2)

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

13-25 Post Deployment Leave/Upkeep Period One  
26 Post Deployment Leave/Upkeep Turnover Day  
27-28 Post Deployment Leave/Upkeep Period Two

**March**

01-12 Post Deployment Leave/Upkeep Period Two  
13-17 Upkeep-San Diego, CA  
13 Hazardous Control and Management Assessment  
18-20 Underway-Type Training (TYT) Southern California  
(SOCAL)  
20 Burial at Sea Ceremony  
21-23 Upkeep-San Diego, CA  
24-25 Underway-SOCAL for Mid-Cycle Assessment (MCA)  
25-27 Ammunition Offload-Seal Beach, CA  
28 Underway-SOCAL  
29-31 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

**April**

01-20 Upkeep-San Diego, CA  
01 Valley Forge Receives the Ney Award for Food Service  
Excellence  
04 French Consul General Visits the Ship  
11 Bring your Daughter to Work Day  
16 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Valley Forge Golf Tournament

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

21-22 Underway-Transit to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico  
23-26 Anchored-Cabo San Lucas, Mexico  
27-29 Underway-Transit to San Diego, CA  
29 Naval Gunfire Support (NGFS) Firing Exercise II  
RAS with USNS WALTER S. DIEHL  
30 Moored-San Diego, CA

**May**

01-22 Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV)--SIMA San  
Diego  
02 Ammunition Transfer to USS ELLIOTT (DD 967)  
Spouse Recognition Day  
05 Deadstick Move to Continental Marine Shipyard  
05-31 Depot Level Ship's Repair Availability (DSRA)-  
Continental Marine, San Diego, CA  
15 Ship's Picnic at Naval Air Station,  
North Island, San Diego

**June**

01-25 DSRA-Continental Marine, San Diego, CA  
08 Valley Forge Day at Jack Murphy Stadium  
(Padres vs. Astros)  
16-20 ATG Engineering Material Checks for CART II  
Pre-Lightoff Training (PLOT III)  
23-27 Cargo/Weapons Elevator Assessment  
26 Move back to Naval Station, San Diego

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

26-30 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

30 Ammunition Transfer from USS ELLIOTT (DD 967)

**July**

01-03 Underway-SOCAL for Sea Trials

04-24 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

07-24 IMAV-SIMA San Diego

07-11 Aviation Safety Inspection Review (ASIR)

14-18 CART IIA

23 Aviation Assist Visit (AAV)

25 Guest Cruise

26-31 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

29 Naval Station San Diego Guest Ship

31 Aviation Readiness Evaluation (ARE)

**August**

01-17 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

18-22 Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA I)

23-24 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

25 TSTA I

26-29 Underway-TSTA I

30-31 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

**September**

01-07 Upkeep-San Diego, CA  
08-11 TSTA I  
12-14 TYT-SOCAL  
15-30 IMAV-SIMA San Diego  
22-26 Logistics Management Assessment (LMA)  
29 NAVOSH Inspection

**October**

01-13 Upkeep-San Diego, CA  
02 Naval Station San Diego Guest Ship  
07 Naval Station San Diego Guest Ship  
14-17 Underway-TSTA II  
18-20 Underway-TYT SOCAL  
21-24 Underway-TSTA II  
21-22 Missile Exercise-VALLEY FORGE fires 1 SM-2  
25-31 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

**November**

01-02 Upkeep-San Diego, CA  
03-04 Underway-Engineering Certification (ECERT)  
05-11 Upkeep-San Diego, CA

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

07 Change of Command--CDR James W. Kear to  
CDR William P. Hoker

10 TSTA III

11 Veterans Day

12-14 Underway--TSTA III

15-16 Upkeep--San Diego, CA

17-30 IMAV--SIMA San Diego

18 Naval Station San Diego Guest Ship

**December**

01 IMAV--SIMA San Diego

02-04 Underway--Final Evaluation Period (FEP)

05-07 Upkeep--San Diego, CA

08-18 Underway--Composite Task Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX)  
with Abraham Lincoln Battle Group

19-31 IMAV--SIMA San Diego

19-28 Holiday Leave/Upkeep Period One

29 Holiday Leave/Upkeep Turnover Day

30-31 Holiday Leave/Upkeep Period Two



Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

**NARRATIVE:**

The majority of 1997 was spent conducting work ups for VALLEY FORGE's 1998 deployment. January of 1997 found VALLEY FORGE returning from their 1996 deployment to the Western Pacific and Arabian Gulf as part of the Middle East Force (MEF). As a reward for an extremely well done job while conducting Maritime Interception Operations (MIO) in support of United Nations sanctions against Iraq, VALLEY FORGE spent a good portion of January, 1997 in port visits. On the way to these port visits, VALLEY FORGE kicked off the new-year with a crossing the equator ceremony on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January. First, they visited Bali, Indonesia from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup>. Next, VALLEY FORGE went to Fremantle/Perth, Australia from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup>. After Perth, the ship visited Sydney, Australia from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup>, and finally visited New Caledonia on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January.

In February, the ship made its last stop before her homecoming in San Diego at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The one-day visit was an opportunity to relax and embark the Tiger Cruise participants who had flown to Hawaii to meet the ship. The Tiger Cruise lasted for the remainder of the deployment as the ship hosted guests to a variety of naval exercises and events. On February 12, 1997, VALLEY FORGE returned to her homeport of San Diego, CA to the welcome of hundreds of anxious family members and friends. For the rest of February, and the beginning of March, VALLEY FORGE enjoyed an extended post-deployment stand down period while crewmembers that were not on leave did upkeep on the ship.

After the stand down and upkeep period, VALLEY FORGE underwent a Hazardous Control and Management Assessment on 13 March. The ship got underway from 18-20 March in order to prepare for the Mid-Cycle Assessment and to conduct a burial at sea. On the 24th, VALLEY FORGE was underway for the Destroyer Squadron Twenty-One Mid-Cycle Assessment of engineering readiness during which she was graded excellent overall. Arriving in Seal Beach, California on 25 March, VALLEY FORGE

Encl (3)

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

conducted an ammunition offload in preparation for her upcoming eight-week shipyard period in May and June.

April began with an upkeep period during which VALLEY FORGE received the Ney Award for Food Service Excellence as the best Food Service ship in her class. The 11th of April was designated as bring your daughter to work day, and allowed children to get an idea of what their fathers do aboard the Ship. On the 16th of April, VALLEY FORGE had her 2nd annual Golf Tournament at the Sea and Air Golf Course at Naval Air Station, North Island. On the 21st of April, the ship was underway again for a trip to Cabo San Lucas, which was sandwiched by training including an NGFS exercise on the 29th of April.

May began the often dreaded heavy repair and maintenance period in the life of the ship. Shore Intermediate Maintenance Facility (SIMA) San Diego conducted a maintenance availability aboard the ship from 1-22 May, and the ship moved to Continental Marine Shipyard in San Diego for a repair availability which lasted eight weeks. During the DSRA VALLEY FORGE received upgrades to her message traffic transmitting and receiving capabilities, and an oil content monitor (OCM) for her oily water separator among numerous other upgrades and repairs.

The ship had a picnic at Admiral Baker Recreation area on the 15th of May. The ship was honored for her hard work by the San Diego Padres MLB team on the 8th of June with reduced rate tickets and a pre-game party. From 16-20 June, VALLEY FORGE conducted pre-lightoff checks and engineering material checks in preparation for sea trials on July 1st to 3rd. VALLEY FORGE continued her maintenance period through July with another IMAV period with SIMA. In July, the ship also went through a series of Aviation Certifications including ASIR, AAV, and ARE.

August began with another upkeep period. From the 18th to the 22nd of August, the ship began the Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA I) which continued from 25-29 August. The ship was underway from 26-29 August for TSTA I.

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

In September, VALLEY FORGE was focused on more upkeep and repairs on the ship, training of the crew, and inspections. TSTA I continued from 8-11 September and was followed by Type Training in the Southern California operating areas. SIMA conducted its third IMAV of the year during the second half of the month. The largest inspection of the ship's supply system, the Logistics Management Assessment (LMA), was passed with flying colors from 22-26 September, with the NAVOSH inspection following on the 29th.

In October, VALLEY FORGE continued its work-up cycle and conducted a missile shoot on the 22nd of October which landed the ship on the front page of the San Diego Union Tribune newspaper. The ship fired a SM-2 missile at an inbound target and the shot was designated as a kill. The ship was also featured as the Naval Station Guest ship twice during October. The ship was underway for TSTA II from the 14th to the 24th of October.

November found VALLEY FORGE completing the final engineering inspection of the work-up cycle called ECERT. As usual, the ship performed very well during this inspection. On November 7, VALLEY FORGE hosted a change of command ceremony as Commander William P. Hoker relieved Commander W. James Kear as Commanding Officer of VALLEY FORGE. The ship was underway again from 12-14 November for TSTA III. SIMA was aboard for the second half of November completing their 4th IMAV of the year for VALLEY FORGE.

In December, VALLEY FORGE completed the Final Evaluation Period of her training cycle from the 2nd to the 4th, and was then underway again from the 8th to the 18th for her first experiences with the ABRAHAM LINCOLN Battle Group, with whom she would deploy in 1998. The end of December found VALLEY FORGE enjoying a holiday leave period and SIMA completing their fifth and final IMAV of 1997.

Subj: 1997 COMMAND HISTORY

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

Photographs, biographies, and pamphlets are included as supporting documentation.

Encl (4)