



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG-48)

FLEET POST OFFICE

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From: Commanding Officer, USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG 48)
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Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

Encl: (1) Command History for USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG 48)

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded.


C. J. CONEWAY

**COMMAND HISTORY
USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG 48)**

USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG 48) was commissioned a unit of the operating forces of the United States Navy in Seattle, Washington 24 November 1984, Commander Clinton J. Coneway, USN, Commanding.

USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG 48) is the forty-second ship of the FFG 7 Oliver Hazard Perry Class. She was built by Todd Pacific Shipyards Corporation Seattle, Washington. VANDEGRIFT's keel was laid 13 October 1981 and she was launched 15 October 1982.

The ship is named for General Alexander A. Vandegrift who was born on March 13, 1887, in Charlottesville, Virginia. Attending the University of Virginia, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 1909. In 1912, Vandegrift participated in the capture of Coyotepe, Nicaragua, and two years later in the occupation of Veracruz, Mexico. He also served aboard the USS MINNESOTA, USS VIRGINIA, USS DELAWARE and USS CHESTER until ordered to Haiti in 1915 for action against the Cacos Bandits. For service in Haiti, where he continued to serve in various capacities until 1923, the President of the Republic of Haiti awarded him their Distinguished Service Medal and the Haitian Medaille Melitaire with one Silver Star. The following 18 years were spent in various posts and stations in the United States with the exception of two tours in China.

In 1942 Vandegrift sailed to the South Pacific as Commanding General of the 1st Marine Division and led his men in the initial landing of the U. S. Forces against the Japanese at Guadalcanal. For this action on August 1942, he was awarded the Navy Cross. Later Vandegrift was awarded the Medal of Honor. The citation reads, "For outstanding and heroic accomplishments above and beyond the call of duty as Commanding Officer of the First Marine Division in operations against the enemy Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands during the period August 7, 1942 to December 9 1942. With the adverse factors of weather, terrain and disease making his task a difficult and hazardous undertaking, and with his command eventually including sea, land and air forces of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps, Major General Vandegrift achieved marked success in commanding the initial landings of the United States Forces in the Solomon Islands and in their subsequent occupation. His tenacity, courage and resourcefulness prevailed against a strong, determined and experienced enemy, and the gallant fighting spirit of the men under his inspiring leadership enabled them to withstand aerial, land and sea bombardment, to surmount all obstacles and leave a disorganized and ravaged enemy. This dangerous but vital mission, accomplished at the constant risk of his life, resulted in securing a valuable base for further operations of our forces against the enemy, and its successful completion reflects great credit upon Major General Vandegrift, his command and the United States Naval Service."

With the successful conclusion of the Solomon Island campaign, Vandegrift assumed command in July of 1943 of the 1st Marine Amphibious Corps and directed the initial landing at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville.

ENCLOSURE (1)

On January 1, 1945, Vandegrift was appointed General, the first active duty Marine Officer to reach four star rank. For guiding the Marine Corps through the final years of the war and the demobilization that followed, Vandegrift received the Distinguished Service Medal. This citation reads in part, "for exceptional meritorious service to the Government of the United States in a duty of great responsibility as Commandant of the United States Marine Corps from January 1, 1944 to June 30, 1946. General Vandegrift exercised extraordinary foresight, initiative and judgment in directing the policies and organization of the Corps. A leader of uncompromising integrity and indefatigable energies, General Vandegrift upheld and quickened the incomparable esprit de corps of his command and developed such a level of combat efficiency to the end that the enemy was overwhelmed by the Marines wherever met."

In December 1947 he left active duty and was placed on the retired list in April of 1949. General Vandegrift died at Bethesda, Maryland, May 8, 1973 at the age of 86.

Captain Howard Venezia, USN, Commander, Surface Squadron One was the Commissioning Officer for USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG 48) and Major General E. C. Cheatham, USMC, Commanding General 1st Marine Division was the principal speaker at the commissioning ceremony.

The 1st Marine Division, General A. A. Vandegrift's command during the Battle of Guadalcanal was represented at the commissioning ceremony by the 1st Marine Division Band and Color Guard. The 1st Marine Division Colors were presented to the VANDEGRIFT by the officers and men of the 1st Marine Division.

Also in attendance were the matron of honor, Mrs. Nancy Vandegrift, and the ship's four sponsors; Miss Courtney A. Vandegrift, Miss Daphne Lee Vandegrift, Miss Stephanie S. Vandegrift and Miss Serina Stylianoudis.

More than one thousand guests attended the commissioning ceremony and the various receptions.

USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG 48) departed Todd Shipyard Seattle on 15 December 1984 and moved cold iron to the United States Coast Guard Supply Center pier 36.

During the month of December VANDEGRIFT successfully completed the Aviation Readiness Examination and Crew Certification, Phase II.

ENCLOSURE (1)