



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS WASP (LHD 1)

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From: Commanding Officer, USS WASP (LHD 1)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,
Washington, DC 20374-0571

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY, USS WASP (LHD 1), 1990 (OPNAV 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Public Affair Releases
(5) WASP Info Book
(6) WASP Year Book
(7) Supporting Photographs

1. The Command History of USS WASP (LHD 1) for 1990 has been compiled in accordance with reference (a) and is forwarded as enclosures (1) through (7).


R. R. HANKE

CHRONOLOGY

January 1990

01JAN	2343	Started the year moored to Pier 5 Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia.
05JAN	1157	RADM Quast arrived for an informal call.
11JAN	0939	RADM Chibow (Inspector General) visit.
11JAN	1300	Commenced Fast Cruise.
12JAN	0935	CINCLANTFLT Deputy arrives.
17JAN	0900	Underway enroute to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
21JAN	1205	Anchored in Anchorage "D" Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Began training period.
29JAN	1440	RADM Rickman (COMTRALANT) arrives for an informal visit.

February 1990

14FEB	1646	Underway enroute to Mayport, Florida.
19FEB	1305	Moored to pier 3 Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.
22FEB	1505	Underway enroute Port Everglades, Florida.
24FEB	1525	Anchored off Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.
25FEB	0834	Underway enroute Port Everglades, Florida.
25FEB	1009	Moor Port Everglades, Florida.
28FEB	0816	Underway enroute Key West Opareas.

March 1990

02MAR	1142	Detonated shot #1 (Shock Trials).
02MAR	1600	Anchored off Key West, Florida.
04MAR	1152	Underway for local ops (KEY WEST OPAREA).
05MAR	1046	Detonated shot #2 (Shock Trails).
05MAR	1515	Anchored off Key West, Florida.
08MAR	1033	Underway for local ops (KEY WEST OPAREA).
08MAR	1514	Sighted vessel in distress, 2 Cuban Men rescued and granted same.
10MAR	1451	Detonated shot #3 (Shock Trials).
10MAR	1840	Anchored off Key West, Florida.
12MAR	0717	CAPT R. R. Hanke relieved CAPT L. F. Picotte as Commanding Officer.
12MAR	0751	Underway enroute Mayport, Florida.
13MAR	1154	Moored STBD side to pier C-4 Naval Station, Mayport, Florida.
17MAR	1224	Underway enroute Port Everglades, Florida.
18MAR	1514	Anchored off Fort Lauderdale, Florida for Channel Finder Testing.
19MAR	0645	Underway for local ops.
19MAR	1832	Anchored off Fort Lauderdale, Florida.
20MAR	0645	Underway for local ops.
20MAR	1856	Completed Channel Finder Tests enroute Norfolk, Virginia.

23MAR 1626 Moored STBD side to Pier 7 Naval Station,
Norfolk, Virginia.
28MAR 0800 COMPHIBRON 12, CAPT Kemple, broke his pennant
onboard.

April 1990

No Entries.

MAY 1990

01MAY 1357 RADM Von Hoeszlin, Federal German Navy, arrived
for a tour.
09MAY 1130 COMSECONDFLT arrived for an informal call.
09MAY 1130 COMPHIBGRU 2 arrived for an informal call.
13MAY 1030 LT [REDACTED], CHC, baptized [REDACTED]
son of OSI [REDACTED] using ship's bell as the
font.

JUNE 1990

11JUN 1325 Armed Forces Staff College Students arrived for
tour of ship.
18JUN 0604 MMFA Essary pronounced dead by ship's doctor.
Cause: suicide by hanging onboard ship.
19JUN 1318 VADM Jean Betermier, Commandant French Naval War
College, arrived for visit.
21JUN 1638 Underway for local operations in VACAPES
OPAREAS.
23JUN 1328 Commenced Helicopter Dynamic Interface.
23JUN 2140 Man Overboard: Identified as AA [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], USN.
23JUN 2200 AA [REDACTED] recovered alive and well.
24JUN 1551 Committed the remains of CDR Earl E. Claridge,
USN (ret) and HT1 Alfred E. Snyder, USN(ret) to
the deep in position 36-44N 075-03.1W.
26JUN 1050 Secured from Helicopter Dynamic Interface.
26JUN 1220 Moored STBD side to Pier 12 Naval Station,
Norfolk, Virginia.
27JUN 0830 Underway for Dependent's Cruise.
27JUN 2030 Moored STBD side to Pier 12 Naval Station,
Norfolk, Virginia.
28JUN 0834 Underway enroute Norfolk Naval Shipyard,
Portsmouth, Virginia.
28JUN 1101 Moored Pier 4 Norfolk, Naval Shipyard,
Portsmouth, Virginia. Commenced PSA.

July 1990

No Entries.

Enclosure (2)

August 1990

No Entries.
September 1990

No Entries.

October 1990

25OCT	0731	Underway for Sea Trials.
26OCT	1551	Moored STBD side to Pier 7 Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.
31OCT	1505	Deputy Asst Secretary of Defense and BGEN Vander Horst, Royal Dutch Marines, arrived for visit.

November 1990

02NOV	1430	Norwegian Defense Committee arrived for visit.
13NOV	0626	Underway for ammo anchorage in Hampton Roads.
13NOV	1010	Commenced ammunition onload at anchor.
16NOV	0807	Underway for local ops.
17NOV	1307	Commenced Combat DF Trials.
20NOV	1710	Moored STBD side to Pier 11 Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.

December 1990

03DEC	0725	Underway for local ops in VACAPES OPAREA for Combat DF Trials.
08DEC	1115	Moored STBD side to Pier 11 Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.
10DEC	1310	Deputy Asst to the Secretary of the Navy arrived for visit.

NARRATIVE

USS WASP commenced 1990 completing its holiday leave and upkeep period while at Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia. The first two weeks of the year were spent making preparations for upcoming Limited Team Training (LTT) and Shock Trials. The ship deployed for Limited Team Training in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on 17 January, 1990. The next month was spent conducting intensive training exercises in the Guantanamo Bay area of operations.

On 14 February the ship concluded LTT and proceeded to Naval Station, Mayport, Florida for ammunition offload and to make other necessary preparations in anticipation of Shock Trials. In addition to the removal of ammunition, highly sensitive medical equipment and other similar gear were removed for stowage at the Naval Station. On 22 February the ship proceeded south to Port Everglades, Florida to rendezvous with the USS MAHAN and USS CONNOLLY prior to their assistance during Shock Trials. Additional civilian personnel were embarked at this time to assist with shock trial testing. On 28 February the ship proceeded to the Key West Operations Area for Shock Trials with the USS MAHAN and USS CONNOLLY under WASPs tactical command.

On 2 March the first of three shock tests was conducted. On 5 March the second shock was conducted. This shock resulted in loss of the ship's air search radar. On 10 March shot #3 was detonated which concluded the shock trial exercise. USS MAHAN and USS CONNOLLY were then dispatched to proceed on their assigned duties. Upon the conclusion of each shot WASP anchored while extensive internal and external surveys of the ship were conducted.

On 12 March Captain Leonard F. Picotte was relieved at anchorage by Captain Robert R. Hanke. Captain Picotte was transferred ashore to Naval Station, Key West, Florida by the ship's assigned helicopter. The ship then proceeded to Naval Station, Mayport, Florida to recover equipment that was removed in preparation for shock trials less our ammunition stores. While in Mayport, Florida the ship made needed repairs suffered during Shock Trials.

WASP was underway once again on 17 March to conduct Channel Finder Testing off Port Everglades, Florida. WASP completed Channel Finder Testing on 20 March and arrived at Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia on 23 March.

On 24 April the ship commenced a 2 month Restricted Availability (RAV) in preparation for a 3 month Post-Shakedown Availability. During this two month availability WASP hosted many foreign and domestic military officials to visits, luncheons and conferences onboard. VIP's included, Commander Second Fleet, Armed Forces Staff College students and the Commandant French Naval War College.

WASP was underway for RAV sea trials and Helicopter Dynamic Interface (HDI) on 24 June. While conducting HDI in the Virginia

Capes, AA [REDACTED] was blown overboard during the approach of a CH-53E. The night time recovery was greatly aided by the use of Night Observation Devices being used by the helicopter pilots in the traffic pattern. The ship's Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat was launched and directed to the man by embarked aircraft. The man was rescued and flown ashore for medical observation at the Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, Virginia. The ship completed HDI and Sea Trials on 26 June. On 27 June the ship hosted a dependent's cruise in the Virginia Capes. The ship arranged for Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) demonstrations and tours, USMC demonstrations and the embarkation of selected Marine amphibious equipment. Visitors were treated to a fly-by of A-6 Intruders and F-14 Tomcats based at Oceana Naval Air Station, Virginia Beach, Virginia. The ship returned to port that evening.

On 28 June the ship transited to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard for a 3 month Post-Shakedown Availability. During these 3 months major enhancements were made to the ships C3 suites. Installation of the Combat DF System was the largest job. In addition to the enhancements, discrepancies noted during acceptance stages were corrected. The ship also passed a Light Off Examination (LOE). The ship departed for Sea Trials on 25 October and returned to Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia. the following day.

Upon returning to the Naval Station, the ship hosted visits by the Deputy Asst. Secretary of Defense, BGEN Vander Horst of the Royal Dutch Marines and the Norwegian Defense Committee. On 13 November, WASP commenced a full load out of ammunition to support the ship's primary mission of support for a Marine Landing Force. Upon completion of ammunition onload the ship conducted additional Combat DF trials and testing in the Virginia Capes. In addition to the Combat DF Trials from 3 December - 8 December, WASP conducted the first at-sea tests of the V-22 OSPREY V/STOL aircraft presently under development by the U.S. Marine Corps and Bell Aircraft.

Once again WASP hosted the Deputy Asst. to the Secretary of the Navy for a tour. The ship then proceeded to enter the leave and upkeep period.

Over the past year the crew has continued to grow into a team by conducting extensive training. As the ship enters 1991 it is well on its way to maintaining the high standards for which it is already known as she prepares for her first deployment overseas. Manning considerations have, however, taken its toll onboard. Due to the rapid and unexpected deployment of other Atlantic Fleet Units in support to Operation Desert Shield, WASP was directed to fill many gaps in the deploying units' manning. The first time for many of the crew to be away from their families occurred during 1990 and no notable change in performance was noted. The crew has adapted well to becoming an operational part of Naval Surface Forces.

Enclosure (3)

A DAY WITH THE WASP

On the morning of 27 June the crew of USS WASP (LHD 1) rolled out the welcome mat for more than 1400 family members and friends as the amphibious assault ship got underway for its very first Dependents Day Cruise. The Cruise, which took the guests on a trip out to the Chesapeake Light Tower, included a picnic in the ship's Hangar Bay and a wide variety of entertainment.

The guests were invited to take a self-guided tour of the ship, which included a First Aid Demonstration, a USMC fast rope demonstration, a Flight Deck Fire Fighting Demonstration, a Damage Control Demonstration, as well as static displays of USMC aircraft and a LCAC (Landing Craft, Air Cushion).

Musical entertainment was provided in the Hangar Bay, with a variety of music ranging from folk songs and ballads to Rock and Jazz performances.

On the ship's Flight Deck, many of the guests covered their ears as two A-6 Intruders from VA-85 Attack Squadron performed bombing and simulated landing runs. Shortly after the A-6s had left the area, they were replaced by two F-14 Tomcats (Tom Catters) from VF-31 who made several high speed runs along side the ship. The spectators also watched LCAC Operations, and had a chance to see the Air Foil Ship, USS GEMINI (PHM 6) make several passes by the ship.

As the day progressed, many of the ship's guests returned to the Hangar Bay for a Barbecue Style lunch and then took in a movie on the ship's Closed Circuit Entertainment System.

After a full day of fun and excitement, the ship slowly made its way back to the Naval Base Piers. It was a day that, for all the guests as well as the crew, would not soon be forgotten.

OSPREY MAKES FIRST SHIPBOARD LANDING ON WASP

The crew of USS WASP (LHD 1) waited patiently Monday, December 3, 1990, for the arrival of the MV-22 Osprey Joint Service Aircraft to make its first shipboard landing. Unfortunately, weather conditions prevented the new tilt-rotor aircraft from arriving.

However, as weather conditions improved on Tuesday afternoon, the tilt-rotor aircraft successfully touched down on WASP's Flight Deck. The historical landing occurred approximately 10 miles off the coast of Norfolk.

The ship then practiced flight operations with two MV-22 Ospreys on Friday. The operations were conducted to test the Osprey's compatibility to shipboard use. While the MV-22s were designed with the LHD-1 class ship in mind, their functions had yet to be tested on an actual ship.

The aircraft's ability to take off and land was tested, their ability to be moved about on the Flight Deck and Hangar Bay was tried and maintenance personnel simulated tasks which would be performed on the aircraft onboard the ship.

"One of our concerns was the severe turbulence which is created by the two 38-foot propeller rotors," said ABHC [REDACTED], WASP's Flight Deck Leading Chief Petty Officer. "This turbulence makes it very difficult for the Flight Deck Personnel to work around the aircraft while the propellers are turning."

The Osprey, which is capable of all weather, day and night operations, did not make the trip to WASP on Monday as scheduled partly because of the delicate equipment installed on the MV-22 for its test period. "Because of all the test equipment onboard the aircraft, it was undesirable to fly the Osprey in the rain during this testing and evaluation period," explained Chief [REDACTED].

According to Kurtis R. Long, Flight Test Engineer for the MV-22 Osprey Program, the Osprey is considered to be the replacement aircraft of the medium-lift assault mission. "Basically, it is supposed to replace the H-46 Helicopter," said Long.

The MV-22 Program, which started in the early 80s, is an off-shot of the XV-15 Tilt-Rotor Program," said Long. The XV-15 program, better known as the J VX program, was the first truly successful tilt-rotor program.

The Osprey is a multi-mission aircraft which will service all branches of the military. However, its primary Navy and Marine Corps mission will be to assist in the vertical assault transport of troops, equipment and supplies from amphibious assault ships to area of operations.

Other primary Osprey missions will be Strike Rescue, as well as delivery and retrieval of Navy Seals and other special warfare teams. It will also be used in logistics transportation in support of the fleet.

Enclosure (4)

The new tilt-rotor aircraft boasts two 10,000 pound external cargo hooks, crash worthy troop and crew seats, a rescue hoist, in flight refueling, a cruising speed of approximately 270 knots and a shorter dash speed of around 300 knots.

Despite all of the Osprey's capabilities, the multi-million-dollar project's financial future has been in question for some time. However, the MV-22 has seen some positive developments. "Congress has already approved funding for limited production of the aircraft," said Long.

SECTION VII
SUMMARY OF ORGANIZATIONAL MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS
SUMMARY BY TOTAL BILLETS
LHD 1 CLASS

OPNAVINST 5320.
02 FEB 90

Enclosure (2)

1. ORGANIZATIONAL MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS ACTIVITY ARE:

OFFICER -----	CPO ---	OTHER ENLISTED -----
65	71	1065

2. GENERAL APPORTIONMENT OF ENLISTED SKILLS IS AS FOLLOWS:

PETTY OFFICERS	61.89%
DESIGNATED STRIKERS	15.05%
NON-RATED PERSONNEL	23.06%

3. PAY GRADE SUMMARY IS AS FOLLOWS:

E-9	7
E-8	19
E-7	45
E-6	126
E-5	194
E-4	312
DESIGNATED STRIKERS	171
NON-RATED PERSONNEL	262

WASP CHANGE OF COMMAND

The USS WASP (LHD-1) held it's first Change of Command ceremony. Captain Robert R. Hanke relieved RADM select Leonard F. Picotte, while WASP was underway in March off the coast of Mayport, Florida.

Captain Hanke was commissioned an Ensign at the NROTC Unit, Northwestern University in June 1965.

Designated an unrestricted Naval Aviator in August, 1966, Captain Hanke reported to his first fleet assignment, HS-3, homeported with CVSG-56 in Norfolk, VA. Serving as Assistant Quality Control Officer, Assistant Admin Officer, Personnel Officer and Assistant NATOPS Officer, he deployed aboard USS RANDOLPH and USS YORKTOWN to the North Atlantic, Mediterranean and South America.

Graduate studies at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, produced an M.S. in Computer Science in December 1971.

Captain Hanke reported to HS-15 at NAS Lakehurst, N.J., for duties as NATOPS and Operations Officer. Operational testing of the sea control ship was conducted aboard USS GUAM during 1972 and 1973.

In June 1975, Captain Hanke graduated from the Command and Staff School of the Naval War College. From August 1975 until January 1978 he flew with VX-1 at NAS, Patuxent River, Maryland serving as Computer System Analyst, Rotary Wing Section Head and Plans and Analysis Department Head. Captain Hanke participated in operational test and evaluation of the LAMPS MK III system and updates to ASW helicopters in HS and HSL squadrons.

Captain Hanke reported as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of HS-15 at Jacksonville, Florida in July 1978. Deployments to the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean were made with CVW-6 aboard USS INDEPENDENCE. During 1980, HS-15 won the CNO Aviation Safety Award, CNAL Battle "E", Isbell ASW Excellence Award and was awarded the Navy Unit Citation.

In 1981 and 1982, Captain Hanke served as Mini Boss and Air Boss aboard USS FORRESTAL, deploying to the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean. Next he reported as Commanding Officer of the East HS Fleet Readiness Squadron, HS-1, at Jacksonville, Florida.

In June 1984, Captain Hanke was assigned as Program Coordinator for CV Helos in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. He was responsible for the procurement of the SH-60F Sea Hawk ASW Helicopter.

Captain Hanke returned to VX-1 at NAS, Patuxent River, Maryland, as Commanding Officer from June 1986 until January 1988. Operational testing of fixed and rotary wing ASW aircraft and systems were conducted, resulting in the CNO Safety Award and consecutive CINCLANTFLT Golden Anchor Awards for retention.

Captain Hanke reported aboard USS GUAM (LPH-9) as Commanding Officer from July 1988 until February, 1990. USS GUAM was awarded the COMNAVSURFLANT battle "E" in January 1990. He reported aboard USS WASP as Prospective Commanding Officer on 8 March 1990.

Captain Hanke's awards include (Legion of Merit) the Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), the Air Medal with Bronze Star and the Navy Achievement Medal.

RADM (Select) Picotte has the proud distinction of being the first Commanding Officer to serve aboard the recently commissioned USS WASP (LHD-1).

He enlisted in the Navy in 1957 and served on the USS SARSFIELD (DD 837). He graduated from Northern Michigan University in June 1963 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics and following the OCS Program at Newport, RI, received his commission the same year. He served onboard the USS HORNET (CVS 12) as Explosive Ordnance Disposal Officer and Gunnery, and then aboard the USS HAMMERBURG (DE 1015) as Main Propulsion Asst.. In June of 1967 he attended Naval Destroyer School at Newport before serving as Weapons Officer of USS PRICHETT (DD 561).

From 1969-71, RADM (Select) Picotte was assigned as Assistant Cruiser/Destroyer Placement Officer with the Bureau of Naval Personnel. He then assumed command of USS MARATHON (PG 89) and operated with River Division 115 in Vietnam. Following this tour he attended San Diego State University obtaining an MA in political science in June 1973. He subsequently graduated from Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, VA.

Returning to sea duty, RADM (Select) Picotte served as Executive Officer of USS POINT DEFIANCE (LSD 31). From 1978-80, he was Executive Officer, and then Officer in Charge of Surface Warfare Officers' School in Coronado, CA. After his tour at SWOS, he served for 6 months as Executive Officer, Naval Station, San Diego, before reporting to USS ALAMO (LSD 33), for duty June 1980 as Commanding Officer. He completed that tour in June 1982 and returned to Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington, D.C. for duty as Surface Warfare Commander Detailer. He then attended the Naval War College, Senior Course in Newport, RI from which he graduated in June 1985.

RADM (Select) Picotte's next assignment was a Commanding Officer of USS DULUTH (LPD 6), which he completed in February 1988. He received orders as Prospective Commanding Officer, Precommissioning Unit WASP (LHD 1) in February 1988, and in May 1989, he assumed command as Commanding Officer until March 1990.

RADM (Select) Picotte's decorations and awards include Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, and Meritorious Unit Commendation.

RADM (Select) Picotte will report to Commander in Chief Atlantic Command where he shall serve as Inspector General.

The USS WASP (LHD 1) is the lead ship of an all-new class of multipurpose amphibious assault ships. The Navy and Marine Corps team's newest amphibious support warship has as its primary mission the embarkation, deployment, landing and support of a Marine Landing Force.