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EXEC/jea
9 Oct 97

From: Commanding Officer, USS WASP (LHD 1)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Washington Navy Yard,
901 M Street SE, Bldg 57, Washington, DC 20374-5060

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY, USS WASP (LHD 1), 1996 (OPNAV 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F
(b) Your ltr 5757 Ser 09BH/SH/7U505394 of 16 Sep 97

Encl: (1) Command Composition
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Supporting Documents

1. USS WASP's Command History for 1996 is forwarded per references (a) and (b). WASP POC is LT [REDACTED], Ship's Secretary at commercial (757) 445-6084 or DSN 445-6084.

S. E. GREENE
By direction

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. **Mission.** USS WASP (LHD 1) is a multi-purpose amphibious assault ship whose primary mission is to embark, deploy, support and land elements of a Marine Landing Force in amphibious assault operations by helicopter, landing craft, amphibious vehicles, V/STOL or any combination of these methods. USS WASP maintains a secondary mission of sea control.

2. **Chain of Command.**

(Administrative)

Amphibious Group TWO

Naval Surface Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet

(Operational)

Amphibious Squadron FOUR (01 Jan 96 - 29 Feb 96)

Amphibious Group TWO (29 Feb 96 - 31 Dec 96)

SIXTH FLEET (01 Jan 96 - 09 Feb 96)

SECOND FLEET (09 Feb 96 - 29 Feb 96)

COMNAVSURFLANT (29 Feb 96 - 31 Dec 96)

3. **Commanding Officer.**

01 Jan 96 - 12 Apr 96 Captain R. A. Duffy, USN

12 Apr 96 - 31 Dec 96 Captain S. C. Greenawalt, USN

4. **Embarked/Attached Commands and Detachments.**

Commander Amphibious Squadron FOUR

Captain C. C. Buchanan - (01 Jan 96 - 31 Mar 96)

Commander TWO SIX Marine Expeditionary Unit

Colonel J. R. Battaglini - (01 Jan 96 - 27 Feb 96)

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron TWO SIX FOUR (Reinforced)

(01 Jan 96 - 27 Feb 96)

Battalion Landing Team TWO / SIX

(01 Jan 96 - 27 Feb 96)

Marine Service Support Group TWO SIX

(01 Jan 96 - 27 Feb 96)

Helicopter Combat Support Squadron EIGHT Detachment TWO

(01 Jan 96 - 28 Feb 96)

Assault Craft Unit FOUR Detachment TWO

LCAC 08/LCAC 38/LCAC 53: (01 Jan 96 - 28 Feb 96)

5. **Homeport.**

United States Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.

Enclosure (1)

CHRONOLOGY

January 1996

- 01 Jan Moored port side to, Diga Di Punta Riso, Brindisi, Italy.
- 02 Jan Hosted visit by the Captain of the Port of Brindisi.
- 03 Jan Underway, enroute Eastern Adriatic in support of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOUR. Steaming in company with USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12), USS MONTEREY (CG-55) and USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41).
- 06 Jan Conducted CIWS pre-action calibration firing exercise.
- 08 Jan USS MONTEREY (CG-55) detached. USS SCOTT (DDG-995) joined the Amphibious Readiness Group.
- 09 Jan Conducted Division Maneuvering Tactics with USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12), USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41), and USS SCOTT (DDG-995). Conducted LCAC operations for training.
- 14 Jan Conducted Underway Replenishment for fuel and stores with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (TAO-195). USS SCOTT (DDG-995) detached. USS SOUTH CAROLINA (CGN-37) joined the Amphibious Readiness Group.
- 20 Jan Hosted visit and tour by the Deputy Commander, French Mediterranean Fleet, Rear Admiral Celerier. Conducted Underway Replenishment for fuel with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (TAO-195).
- 23 Jan Hosted visit by the Commander, Italian Third Naval District, Rear Admiral Bolongaro. Lost fires in all boilers. Ship adrift for approximately four hours in the vicinity of 41-17.7N / 017-14.4E. Casualty due to a failed motor-operated fuel oil suction valve.
- 27 Jan Conducted CIWS pre-action calibration firing exercise.
- 29 Jan WASP detached from USS SHREVEPORT, USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41), and USS SOUTH CAROLINA (CGN-37). Transited the Straits of Otranto enroute Corfu, Greece. Anchored off Corfu, Greece for a port visit. Liberty granted crew and embarked personnel.
- 31 Jan Underway, enroute Port Said, Egypt for contingency operations.

Enclosure (2)

February 1996

- 01 Feb Rendezvoused with USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12) and USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41) and continued transit to Port Said, Egypt for contingency operations. Conducted Underway Replenishment for fuel with USNS BIG HORN (TAO-198).
- 03 Feb Arrived off Port Said, Egypt. Steaming in MODLOC awaiting developments for contingency operations. USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12) detached and proceeded to Haifa, Israel for emergency repairs.
- 05 Feb USS SHREVEPORT rejoined Amphibious Readiness Group.
- 07 Feb Commenced transit to western Mediterranean Sea for Amphibious Readiness Group turnover with the USS GUAM (LPH-9) Amphibious Readiness Group.
- 08 Feb Amphibious Readiness Group delayed due to bad weather. Remained in MODLOC off Cape Said, Egypt.
- 09 Feb Recommenced transit to Western Mediterranean.
- 11 Feb Rendezvoused with USS GUAM Amphibious Readiness Group for turnover.
- 12 Feb Conducted Full Power run.
- 14 Feb Transited the Straits of Gibraltar. Departed the Mediterranean Sea and entered the Atlantic Ocean. Disembarked LCACs for equipment washdown. Moored starboard side to, Pier One, Naval Station, Rota, Spain. Commenced space and equipment washdown.
- 15 Feb Commander Sixth Fleet, Vice Admiral Pilling, arrived for a visit.
- 16 Feb Completed washdown. All areas and equipment inspected satisfactorily by agricultural inspector. Underway, enroute Morehead City, North Carolina for Marine offload. Re-embarked LCACs for return to CONUS transit.
- 21 Feb Conducted CIWS Pre-action Calibration firing exercise. Member of COMPHIBRON FOUR staff, YNCS (SW/AW) James R. Anderson passed away due to cardiac arrest.
- 24 Feb Conducted memorial service for YNCS (SW/AW) James R. Anderson from COMPHIBRON FOUR staff. Conducted 21 Gun salute and placed memorial wreath in water at position 31-34.0N / 063-02.6W.

26 Feb Disembarked LCACs for Marine offload. Anchored in Anchorage area "A" off Morehead City, North Carolina for Marine offload. Deputy TWO MEF arrived for visit. Commenced offload of 26 MEU personnel and equipment.

27 Feb Embarked LCU 1645 and 1654 for transit to Norfolk. Completed offload of 26 MEU equipment and personnel. Underway enroute Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia in company with USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12) and USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41).

28 Feb Disembarked LCU-1645 and LCU-1654 for return to Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek. Disembarked HC-Eight Detachment Two aircraft. Moored starboard side to, Pier Seven North, Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia. Completed MED 3-95 Deployment. Commenced post-deployment leave and stand-down period.

March 1996

01 Mar Moored starboard side to, Pier Seven North, Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia. Post deployment leave and stand-down period continues.

30 Mar Completed post-deployment leave and stand-down period.

April 1996

01 Apr Moored starboard side to, Pier Seven North, Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia.

02 Apr Underway, enroute G-2 Anchorage in Hampton Roads for ammunition off-load. Anchored at G-2 Anchorage and commenced ammunition offload in preparation for Complex Overhaul.

05 Apr Completed ammunition offload. Underway, enroute Naval Station, Norfolk. Moored starboard side to, Pier Seven North, Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.

12 Apr Conducted Change of Command. Captain Stanton C. Greenawalt relieved Captain Raymond A. Duffy as Commanding Officer, USS WASP.

15 Apr Underway, enroute Norfolk Naval Shipyard for Complex Overhaul. Ship moved under tug power, propulsion plant secured. Entered Drydock Number Eight, stern in, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Commenced Complex Overhaul. Crew move-off complete. Crew residing at Norfolk Naval Shipyard Bachelor Enlisted Quarters. Duty Sections residing in APL-42 moored alongside Drydock Number Eight.

May 1996

01 May In Drydock, stern in, Drydock Number Eight, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Continuing Complex Overhaul.

June 1996

01 Jun In Drydock, stern in, Drydock Number Eight, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Continuing Complex Overhaul.

20 Jun Received notification of the suicide of PHAN Cheyenne W. Ryder, USN. Service member assigned to OT Division in Operations Department.

July 1996

01 Jul In Drydock, stern in, Drydock Number Eight, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Continuing Complex Overhaul.

02 Jul Received notification of selection as Runner-up for the 1996 CAPT Edward F. Ney Memorial Award for Food Service Excellence.

04 Jul Conducted "Let Freedom Ring" bell ringing ceremony.

August 1996

01 Aug In Drydock, stern in, Drydock Number Eight, Norfolk

Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Continuing
Complex Overhaul.

September 1996

01 Sep In Drydock, stern in, Drydock Number Eight, Norfolk
Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Continuing
Complex Overhaul.

October 1996

01 Oct In Drydock, stern in, Drydock Number Eight, Norfolk
Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Continuing
Complex Overhaul.

10 Oct Drydock partly filled and drained to reposition ship
and test watertight integrity of hull.

15 Oct Drydock flooded and opened to the sea. Ship floated
clear, moored as before.

November 1996

01 Nov In Drydock, stern in, Drydock Number Eight, Norfolk
Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Continuing
Complex Overhaul.

22 Nov APL moved and moored to immediately forward of Drydock
Number Eight on the starboard side.

December 1996

01 Dec In Drydock, stern in, Drydock Number Eight, Norfolk
Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Continuing
Complex Overhaul.

16 Dec Commenced holiday leave period.

NARRATIVE

WASP commenced 1996 moored at Diga Di Punta Riso, Brindisi, Italy enjoying a much needed port visit. On 02 January, she hosted the Captain of the Port of Brindisi for a luncheon and tour. Underway on 03 January, WASP proceeded to the Eastern Adriatic to continue her support of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOUR acting as the Ready Reserve for the Implementation Forces. While in this area, her Amphibious Readiness Group was comprised of USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12), USS MONTEREY (CG-55), and USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41). WASP conducted numerous exercises and training events including a CIWS pre-action calibration firing (06 January), LCAC operations (09 January), and Division Tactical Maneuvers with SHREVEPORT, USS SCOTT (DDG-995) (replaced MONTEREY on 08 January), and WHIDBEY ISLAND (09 January). On 14 January and again on 20 January, the ARG refueled from USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (TAO-195). Fourteen January also saw SCOTT detached, replaced by USS SOUTH CAROLINA (CGN-37) as escort.

WASP hosted two additional VIP visits during the month of January. On 20 January, the Deputy Commander of the French Mediterranean Fleet, Rear Admiral Celerier came aboard for a visit and tour. And, on 23 January, WASP hosted a visit, including lunch and a tour by the Commander, Italian Third Naval District, Rear Admiral Bolongaro. Twenty-three January also saw WASP suffer a loss of fires in all boilers. While conducting single boiler operations, she suffered a casualty to a motor-operated fuel oil suction valve, extinguishing fires in the on-line boiler. The ship was without propulsion for approximately four hours until fires were restored. Electrical power was supplied by the Emergency Diesel Generators. No personnel casualties were encountered. On 29 January, WASP detached from the rest of the ARG and proceeded out of the Adriatic to a much needed port visit at Corfu, Greece. Liberty was granted the crew and embarked personnel. On 31 January, WASP received additional tasking to sortie for support of contingency operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Upon recalling all personnel from liberty, she was underway by early afternoon, enroute at high speed for the waters off Port Said, Egypt.

Enclosure (3)

February saw WASP continuing her transit toward Egyptian waters. On 01 February, she rendezvoused with USS SHREVEPORT and USS WHIDBEY ISLAND, and also refueled from the USNS BIG HORN (TAO-

198). On 03 February, The WASP ARG arrived off Port Said, Egypt to await political developments. USS SHREVEPORT was detached to proceed to Haifa, Israel for emergency repairs. The ARG remained on station awaiting a possible Non-Combatant Evacuation of American citizens from the country of Sudan. The ships prepared for a possible transit of the Suez Canal.

Shreveport rejoined the ARG on 05 February. On 07 February, the political situation in Sudan eased, and the ARG was released from contingency support operations. The ARG commenced the transit to the Western Mediterranean for turnover with the USS GUAM (LPH-9) ARG. The transit was delayed over 24 hours due to inclement weather. The ARG experienced high winds and blowing sand, at times reducing visibility to less than 1000 yds. On 09 February, the weather abated, and the ARG continued the transit West. Eleven February saw WASP and her consorts rendezvous with the GUAM ARG for turnover off the southeast coast of Sicily. Upon completion, WASP and her accompanying ships continued their transit west, passing through the Straits of Gibraltar and arriving at Rota, Spain for equipment washdown on 14 February. On 15 February, WASP hosted a visit from Commander, SIXTH FLEET, Vice Admiral Pilling. All areas, spaces, and equipment were satisfactorily inspected on 16 February, and WASP departed enroute Morehead City, North Carolina.

On 21 February, YNCS (SW/AW) James R. Anderson, USN, suffered a cardiac arrest and passed away during off-duty physical fitness training in the ship's gym. Funeral services were conducted and a memorial wreath was placed in the water at position 31-34.0N / 063-02.6W on 24 February. The body was flown to Bermuda for further transfer to CONUS. On 25 February, WASP debarked the Harrier detachment of HMM-264. Twenty-six February saw WASP anchoring in Anchorage "A" off Morehead City, North Carolina and commencing the offload of TWO SIX MEU. On 27 February, WASP completed the offload of TWO SIX MEU and embarked LCU-1645 and LCU-1654 for the transit to Naval Station, Norfolk. LCACs 08,

38, and 58 returned onboard USS Whidbey Island. On 28 February, WASP disembarked her two LCUs in the vicinity of Lynnhaven Anchorage off Thimble Shoal Channel prior to returning to port. She then moored to Pier Seven North, Naval Station, Norfolk, and commenced her post deployment leave and stand down period.

The month of March began with WASP at Pier Seven conducting her

leave and stand down period. On 15 March, first leave period personnel returned, and second leave period personnel departed. Post deployment leave and standown was completed on 30 March.

On 2 April, WASP got underway enroute to G-2 Anchorage in Hampton Roads to off-load ammunition in preparation for Complex Overhaul. Off-load was completed 5 April and WASP returned to Pier Seven at Naval Station, Norfolk, starboard side to. The following week saw preparations for the change of command of WASP from Captain Raymond A. Duffy to Captain Stanton C. Greenawalt, formerly WASP's Executive Officer, which took place 12 April. WASP was underway 15 April for the last time this year enroute to Norfolk Naval Shipyard for an 11-month, \$80 million Complex Overhaul. The propulsion plant was secured and the ship moved under tug power. WASP entered Drydock Number Eight, stern in. The ship was positioned over supporting blocks and the drydock drained. The crew moved off the ship to reside in Enlisted Bachelor's Quarters at Norfolk Naval Shipyard and were bused to and from the ship. Duty sections resided in APL 42 moored at a berth alongside Drydock Number Eight. The Complex Overhaul commenced immediately and continued throughout the remainder of the year.

The remaining months of 1996 was dedicated to shipyard and ship's force projects for Complex Overhaul to be completed early in 1997. On June 20, WASP received the sad news that she had lost a crewmember PHAN Cheyenne W. Rider in a suicide at Virginia Beach. WASP was notified July 2nd of its selection as Runner-up for the 1996 CAPT Edward F. Ney Memorial Award for Food Service Excellence in the Large Ship Category. July 4, WASP conducted the national "Let Freedom Ring" bell ringing observance.

WASP reached a milestone October 10th when Drydock Number Eight was partly filled and then drained to reposition the ship and test the watertight integrity of her hull. On 15 October, the drydock was filled and opened to the sea. The ship floated clear, moored as before. November 22nd, the duty crew's APL was moved and moored directly forward of the ship on the starboard side. The ship commenced its first holiday leave period December 16th. The first leave group returned December 27th relieving the second group. WASP ended 1996 with renovations and upgrades at various levels of completion.