

U.S.S. MONTICELLO (LSD-35)
FLEET POST OFFICE
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From: Commanding Officer, USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (09B9)

Subj: Ship's Command History for 1966; submission of

Ref: (a) CNO ltr OP-09B91 SH/jw, Ser 3305PO9B9 of 12 SEP 67

Encl: (1) USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35) Command History for 1966

1. In response to reference (a) enclosure (1) is forwarded herewith.


R. F. STANTON

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USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35)

BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS

- CALANDAR YEAR 1966 -

- 28 January: MONTICELLO commenced Operation Double Eagle as a member of Task Group 76.6, Amphibious Force, SEVENTH Fleet.
- 18 February: Captain V. F. KELLEY, USN relieved Captain G. W. FOLTA, USN as Commanding Officer, off Chu Lai, South Vietnam.
- 14 April: MONTICELLO arrived at her homeport of San Diego after an 8½ month deployment.
- 16 May - 24 May: MONTICELLO transported the Bathyscape Trieste II from Mare Island to San Diego.
- 20 July: MONTICELLO commenced three month overhaul and dry dock period at Todd Shipyard, San Pedro, California.
- 21 November: MONTICELLO commenced four weeks of Refresher Training.
- 19 December: MONTICELLO completed Refresher Training - Entered Type Commander's Holiday Leave Period.

NARRATIVE HISTORY OF USS MONTICELLO

1 January - 31 December 1966

The year 1966 began with MONTICELLO mid-way through a deployment to South East Asia area under the command of Captain G. W. FOLTA, USN. It was the ship's sixth deployment to the Western Pacific, since her commissioning in 1957. She had departed homeport, San Diego, in August of 1965 as a member of the Amphibious Squadron FIVE, Amphibious Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet. During service in the Western Pacific she came under the operational control of Commander U. S. SEVENTH Fleet, operating as a unit of Amphibious Force SEVENTH Fleet (TF 76).

USS MONTICELLO is the eighth of eight Landing Ship Docks of the THOMASTON (LSD-28) class built by the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation for the United States Navy. Her primary mission is transport of Marines, amphibious vehicles, troop vehicles, amphibious boats, LVT (Landing Vehicle Tracked), tanks, helicopters, guns and combat cargo and equipment to the amphibious objective area to be landed as early assault waves on enemy beaches. The ship can accommodate up to 350 troop officers and enlisted men. In addition to carrying troops and troop vehicles, boats and cargo the LSD acts as the Primary Control Ship (PCS) or Secondary Control Ship (SCS) at the assault beach. The PCS is responsible for getting troops and cargo on the enemy beach by regulating an intricate time table. The SCS acts as a haven for amphibious boats and vehicles when the weather is inclement or they need repairs. The Secondary Control Ship must also be prepared to assume the duties of the Primary Control Ship at anytime.

During January 1966 the MONTICELLO, as a unit of Task Group 76.5 was engaged heavily in the transport of Marines. From 29 December 1965 to 5 January 1966 the ship offloaded Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 3/4 at Oro Wan and Buckner Bay, Okinawa. The ship then loaded BLT 2/3 and proceeded to the Philippines. The period 7-17 January was spent inport Subic Bay.

From 20 to 23 January MONTICELLO engaged in Hilltop III, an amphibious exercise conducted at Blue Beach, near San Jose, Mindoro, Republic of the Philippines. Ships present for Hilltop III in addition to MONTICELLO were: USS PAUL REVERE, USS VALLEY FORGE, USS MONTROSE, USS SKAGIT and USS CATAMOUNT. OCE was Commander Amphibious Squadron FIVE embarked in USS VALLEY FORGE. The purpose of the exercise was to give ships training in the type of operations being conducted on the coast of Vietnam.

Upon completion of Hilltop III, MONTICELLO was assigned to Task Group 76.6, now designated the SEVENTH Fleet Amphibious Ready Group, while participating in Operation Double Eagle off the coast of Vietnam.

Operation Double Eagle which commenced on 28 January, was to be the longest and largest amphibious operation of the Vietnamese conflict up to that time. Its purpose was to engage Viet Cong entrenched on the South Vietnamese coast near Thach Tru and secure a beach head and in country areas. MONTICELLO with its varied capabilities performed in an outstanding manner during the 28 days of the operation. In several instances MONTICELLO served as Primary Control Ship for ship to shore movements. Ships accompanying MONTICELLO for this important assault landing were: USS CATAMOUNT, USS NAVARRO, USS FORT MARION, USS PAUL REVERE, USS MONTROSE, USS VALLEY FORGE, USS OKLAHOMA CITY, USS BARRY, USS TOM GREEN COUNTY, USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY, USS WINDHAM COUNTY, and USS WEISS. OTC was Commander Amphibious Squadron FIVE embarked in USS VALLEY FORGE.

On 18 February as the ship lay at anchor off Chu Lai, South Vietnam, Captain V. F. KELLEY, USN relieved Captain G. W. FOLTA, USN and thus became the ship's tenth commanding officer.

As Operation Double Eagle ended on 26 February, MONTICELLO off-loaded BLT 2/3 at Danang, South Vietnam, and her assignment as a member of the SEVENTH Fleet Amphibious Ready Group came to an end. She proceeded to Subic Bay for an upkeep period (3-9 March) and then to Hong Kong via Danang. The ship arrived in Hong Kong for rest and recreation on 14 March 1966. On 19 March she was once again underway, stopping in Yokosuka, Japan, (24-28 March) and finally enroute CONUS via Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. She steamed in company with USS MONTROSE.

MONTICELLO arrived San Diego 14 April. During the deployment she steamed 30,646 miles, transported 4,507 Marines and 15,183 tons of cargo. The ship participated in 18 underway replenishments, 8 vertical replenishments. She ballasted 251 times. The ship spent a total of 65 days in the combat zone, 44 of which she was engaged in combat operations. She anchored 63 times and visited 9 Western Pacific ports. Captain G. W. FOLTA was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal for his leadership during MONTICELLO's deployment.

From 14 April until 16 May 1966 the ship was assigned a leave period inport San Diego. Then MONTICELLO was again called to duty for a very unique task, that of transporting the Navy's deep diving bathyscape, TRIESTE II, from Mare Island, California to her new home at San Diego. The ship reported to the San Francisco Bay area on 18 May and after the delicate loading operations she proceeded to San Diego, offloading TRIESTE on 24 May at Ballast Point.

From 24 May to 18 July MONTICELLO was inport San Diego accomplishing routine maintenance. On 1 July the ship was reassigned to Amphibious Squadron NINE. Her homeport remained San Diego.

On 19 July MONTICELLO commenced a three month overhaul at Todd Shipyard, San Pedro, California. During this period she underwent

extensive rework and several alterations were accomplished. The ship returned to San Diego on 5 November.

On 21 November the ship began an intensive four week period of Refresher Training under the control of the Fleet Training Group at San Diego. This was completed on 19 December and MONTICELLO completed the year inport at San Diego.