

U.S.S. MONTICELLO (LSD-35)
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

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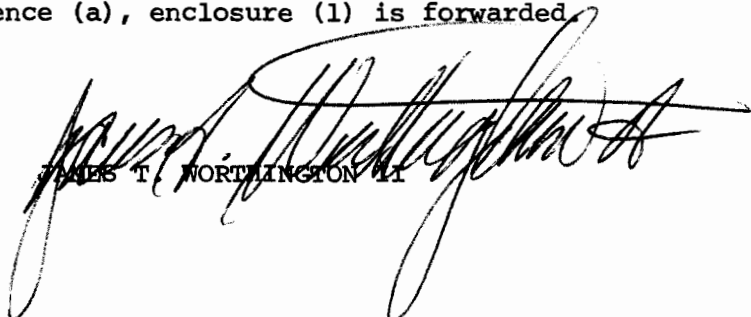
From: Commanding Officer, USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

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Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

Encl: (1) Annual Command History for 1979

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



JAMES T. NORTHINGTON II

COMMAND HISTORY
1979

NARRATIVE

USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35) ushered in the year 1979 inport Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, midway through her 1978-79 WESTPAC deployment. On 4 January the ship departed Subic Bay, en route to Japan. After a short stop at Numazu, Japan to offload embarked Marines and their equipment, MONTICELLO steamed into Tokyo Bay and arrived at the Yokosuka Naval Base on 12 January for regular maintenance and upkeep.

MONTICELLO departed Yokosuka 10 February to take part in a jointly executed amphibious operation with Amphibious Squadron ONE and forces of the Republic of Korea's Navy. On 16 February, while anchored off the Korean coast at Pohang, MONTICELLO was conducting amphibious operations and was ballasted down to receive landing craft in her well deck. Suddenly the relatively calm seas became raging swells which succeeded in lifting MONTICELLO's 42-ton stern gate up and down a number of times before breaking it completely away from the ship. Though still capable of carrying out her assigned tasks without the stern gate, it was decided that MONTICELLO should return to Yokosuka to be refitted with the recovered stern gate. After steaming through the narrow Straits of Shimonoseki, the ship arrived at Yokosuka 27 February.

After nearly a month inport, during which time all necessary repairs were completed, MONTICELLO departed Yokosuka 20 March and set course for home. Steaming east, and anchoring inside the tiny island atoll of Ene-wetak, a turnover was completed with the newly arrived USS MOUNT VERNON (LSD-39), part of the relieving Amphibious Squadron SEVEN. On 26 March the ship was again underway, en route to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Arriving at Pearl Harbor the morning of 2 April, ship's company "turned to" for the offload of troops and equipment, after which stores and supplies for the final leg of MONTICELLO's trek were brought aboard.

MONTICELLO departed Pearl Harbor 4 April, underway for her homeport of San Diego, California. Embarked among the crew were twenty male dependents and relatives of crewmembers, participating in the command-sponsored "Tiger Cruise" (Annex A). After anticipating the moment for nearly seven months, MONTICELLO arrived in San Diego 11 April to an excited gathering of dependents, relatives, and friends. The next few weeks were devoted to a leave and standdown period, in which a maximum number of crewmembers were given the opportunity to relax and renew family relationships and friendships after the long and demanding deployment.

Enclosure (1)

Rested and again at full strength, MONTICELLO was underway once more on 15 May for operations off the coast of Southern California. The majority of time was spent shuttling U.S. Marines from San Clemente Island to Camp Pendleton and return as the island-based personnel were rotated. An 18 May return to San Diego gave the ship a short upkeep period, followed by a short trip up the coast to Seal Beach on 29 May, where all ammunition and ordnance was offloaded at the Naval Weapons Station. MONTICELLO returned to San Diego on 1 June.

The remainder of June and most of July was spent preparing MONTICELLO for her upcoming overhaul while awaiting word of the final selection of the shipyard who was to do the work. Northwest Marine Iron Works of Portland, Oregon was awarded the contract and it was decided that MONTICELLO would officially change homeport to Portland.

Departing San Diego 25 July, MONTICELLO was on her way to the Pacific Northwest and after special arrangements were made, sixteen dependents of junior crewmembers were allowed to make the voyage on the ship (Annex B). On 27 July MONTICELLO made her appearance at the Golden Gate and stopped for an enjoyable three-day port visit to San Francisco, California. The ship was underway once again on 30 July for her final destination of Portland. Arriving in Portland on 2 August, the crew settled in for an intensive nine-month overhaul. Concurrently, MONTICELLO's homeport was changed to Portland, Oregon. She ended 1979 midway through this overhaul, not scheduled to complete until May 1980.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

On 27 August, 1979 Commander James T. WORTHINGTON, II assumed command from Captain Andrew J. CONKLIN in a colorful ceremony on the flight deck of the personnel barge tied alongside. Captain Richard J. CAVICKE, Commander Amphibious Squadron ONE was the guest speaker at the ceremony.

ANNEX A

Civilians embarked for "Tiger Cruise":

Eric J. MORIN, son of LTJG MORIN, Ship's Boatswain
Andrew J. CONKLIN, son of CAPT CONKLIN, Commanding Officer
Thomas E. CONKLIN, son of CAPT CONKLIN, Commanding Officer
James W. CONKLIN, son of CAPT CONKLIN, Commanding Officer
Charles R. WOOD, son of HMC WOOD, Senior Medical Representative
Maurice T. WOOD, son of HMC WOOD, Senior Medical Representative
Dean W. BROWN, brother of ENFN BROWN, "A" Division
James L. BROWN, father of ENFN BROWN, "A" Division
Austin G. McCANN, father of ENS McCANN, Gunnery Officer
Joel J. McCANN, brother of ENS McCANN, Gunnery Officer
Gerald J. COREY, brother of PN3 COREY, "X" Division
Don A. VALDEZ, son of EMC VALDEZ, "E" Division
Carlo A. VALDEZ, son of EMC VALDEZ, "E" Division
Lee F. SWARTZ, son of LT SWARTZ, Chief Engineer
Elihu W. SWARTZ, brother of LT SWARTZ, Chief Engineer
Ruben M. RODRIGUES, father of RM3 RODRIGUES, "OC" Division
Robert D. RODRIGUES, brother of RM3 RODRIGUES, "OC" Division
James R. ISAACSON, son of BM1 ISAACSON, Second Division
Leroy V. EROH, father of SN EROH, First Division

Enclosure (1)

Annex B

Civilians embarked for transit to Portland, Oregon:

Rosalinda R. REASOL, wife of SN REASOL, X Division
Rozelia L. REASOL, daughter of SN REASOL, X Division
Lindy M. MAXEY, wife of BTFN MAXEY, B Division
Sherrie L. LEWIS, wife of SA LEWIS, 1st Division
Lynn V. KOZAR, wife of SN KOZAR, 2nd Division
Kimberley A. BEAVER, wife of SN BEAVER, 1st Division
Kathy J. WOLF, wife of BTFA WOLF, B Division
Terry M. STENZEL, wife of MSSR STENZEL, S-2 Division
Christy M. STENZEL, daughter of MSSR STENZEL, S-2 Division
Donna COFFMAN, wife of SA COFFMAN, 2nd Division
Julianna L. MOORE, wife of HTFN MOORE, R Division
Joshua D. MOORE, son of HTFN MOORE, R Division
Taylor B. SAUNDERS, wife of BT3 SAUNDERS, B Division
Dennis R. SAUNDERS, son of BT3 SAUNDERS, B Division
Diane S. MATHEWS, wife of PNSN MATHEWS, X Division
Nannette S. ROGERS, wife of MS3 ROGERS, S-2 Division

Enclosure (1)