



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35)
PPO SAN FRANCISCO 96672

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From: Commanding Officer, USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35)
To: Director of Naval History (OP 09BH) Washington Navy Yard, Washington
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Subj: Command History; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

Enc1: (1) USS MONTICELLO's Command History for 1981

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


D. L. WETHERELL

NARRATIVE

USS MONTICELLO opened the year 1981 inport San Diego, California preparing for work-up training leading to a WESTPAC Deployment. During the month of January, MONTICELLO was assigned a Restricted Availability and a Tender Availability directed at correcting material deficiencies which were impacting on a scheduled underway period for local operations in the SOCAL OPAREAS on 13-14 January. These efforts continued through the month of February and into March. In addition to the normal maintenance and training which were on-going, a Command Inspection was conducted by Commander, Amphibious Squadron THREE during the week of 09 February, and a Technical Assistance Availability was assigned from 09-22 February.

Following a short underway period 12-14 March to test equipment, MONTICELLO's formal at-sea training program commenced with Interim Refresher Training on 16 March. REFTRA was successfully concluded on 28 March, and MONTICELLO returned to San Diego. MONTICELLO's Engineering Department was tested again from 30 March to 03 April, when the members of COMNAVSURFPAC's Mobile Team Training Unit conducted Phase II of an Operating Propulsion Plant Examination.

On 06 April MONTICELLO was underway from San Diego for Amphibious Refresher Training at Camp Pendleton and Coronado Roads. After successful completion of the two weeks of Amphibious Training, MONTICELLO returned to San Diego on 17 April.

A series of inspections, including Combat Systems Readiness Tests, Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection, A Medical Readiness Examination, and a Medical and Dental Records Inspection were the order of business during the week of 20 April.

On 27 April MONTICELLO was underway in the Southern California Operating Areas for three days of Independent Steaming and Unit Training, returning to San Diego on 29 April.

On 04 May, MONTICELLO was underway to participate in Exercise KERNEL USHER 82-2. Operating with units of Amphibious Squadron THREE, MONTICELLO participated in an Amphibious Landing at Camp Pendleton. The exercise completed MONTICELLO returned to San Diego on 15 May.

Following a week of upkeep, MONTICELLO's Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) commenced on 25 May. The month long period inport allowed time for maintenance and final preparation prior to overseas deployment.

On 24 June, MONTICELLO departed San Diego for Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the first leg of the WESTPAC Transit. The ship arrived in Pearl Harbor on 02 July. MONTICELLO was underway from 06 to 10 July for Operation BELL VOLCANO, which

MONTICELLO entered the realm of the Golden Dragon, crossing the international date line on 19 July, and pulled into its first WESTPAC port at Okinawa, Japan on 23 July.

After loading U.S. Marines and equipment aboard MONTICELLO got underway for Numazu, Japan on 26 July. Two trips were required to complete the transfer and after the second trip the ship proceeded to Yokosuka, Japan, arriving on 06 August for scheduled upkeep. On 14 August MONTICELLO was underway again for Okinawa to conduct another Marine loadout. The ship arrived in Buckner Bay, Okinawa on 16 August and loaded out Battalion Landing Team 2/5 the same day, getting underway on 17 August for Pusan, Korea, as Commander of the Amphibious Separate Operations Group.

Acting as Commander of the Amphibious Separate Operations Group, comprised of USS ANCHORAGE (LSD-36) and USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35), MONTICELLO arrived in Pusan on 19 August and began preparations for Operation KERNEL USHER 81-7/TWIN DRAGON XVI, a combined United States/Republic of Korea Amphibious Assault Exercise. The exercise was conducted from 21 August to 26 August and was concluded with a landing at TOK-SOK-RI on the South Korean Coast. The ship then returned to Okinawa on 28 August.

Typhoon Agnes cut short the inport period in Okinawa, and MONTICELLO got underway the next day, 29 August, to evade the storm. Traveling through heavy seas, MONTICELLO cleared the storm center and was able to make a port visit arriving in Hong Kong, BCC on 01 September.

After one week in Hong Kong, MONTICELLO was underway for Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, for a three week maintenance period, scheduled for 10 September to 02 October.

The upkeep completed, MONTICELLO steamed to Thailand, stopping briefly in Sattahip to refuel on 07 October and then continued to Pattaya, arriving on the same day. In Pattaya, plans were finalized for KERNEL USHER 82-1, a Joint U.S./Thai Amphibious Exercise participated in by the Separate Operations Group. The operation commenced on 12 October and was concluded on 16 October with an Amphibious Landing on Rayong Beach. After equipment and personnel were back-loaded MONTICELLO was underway for Okinawa. On 18 October eighteen Vietnamese Refugees were sighted and embarked from a small boat about 250 miles South of Ho Chi Minh City. With the refugees settled down and being cared for, the ship resumed its transit to Okinawa. On 21 October, a lookout spotted a Soviet Foxtrot Class Submarine on the surface. After pinpointing to higher authority its position MONTICELLO resumed her transit to Okinawa, arriving on 23 October. After debarking the marines onboard, MONTICELLO departed Okinawa on 24 October and arrived in Yokohama, Japan on 27 October. In Yokohama, MONTICELLO unloaded elements of BLT 3/9.

South Korea to transfer marines for a Combined Arms Firing Exercise. Command of USS MONTICELLO changed 12 November, at White Beach, Okinawa, Japan when CDR David L. WETHERELL, USN, relieved CAPT J. T. WORTHINGTON, II as Commanding Officer. After disembarking the second load of marines at Inchon on 17 November, MONTICELLO offloaded ammunition at Chinhae, South Korea on 19 November prior to sailing to Sasebo, Japan. Upon arrival in Sasebo on 20 November the ship underwent an eight day maintenance period and departed for Naha, Okinawa on 29 November.

MONTICELLO arrived in Naha on 31 November to onload USMC equipment for transit to Pearl Harbor, HI. The ship left Naha on 02 December to rendezvous with units of Amphibious Squadron THREE and then proceeded to Pearl Harbor, HI arriving 14 December. In Pearl Harbor thirty-three male guests and/or dependents embarked for "TIGER CRUISE". These relatives and friends of crewmembers sailed with MONTICELLO sailors from Pearl Harbor on 16 December.

MONTICELLO arrived in San Diego on 23 December, concluding the six-month deployment. The final week of 1981 was devoted to celebrating the Holidays during the Post Deployment leave and upkeep period.

COMMAND HISTORY

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Loss of Port Anchor. On 3 August, while unloading USMC Amphibious vehicles at Oura Wan, Okinawa, MONTICELLO's Port Bower Anchor became fouled on three coral heads. Upon attempting to raise the anchor, the hydraulic system in the Anchor Windlass failed, causing the anchor to be lost over the side.

USS BOLSTER was called in to assist salvaging the anchor. It was located in 30 fathoms of water, and recovered by BOLSTER on 17 August. The anchor was transported to White Beach, Okinawa, and replaced aboard MONTICELLO on 29 August. Since MONTICELLO has two anchoring systems, no scheduled operations were affected.

Change of Command. on 12 November, in a colorful ceremony on the flight deck Commander D. L. WETHERELL relieved Captain J. T. WORTHINGTON, II on MONTICELLO's flight deck. Rear Admiral SCHICK, Commander Amphibious Group ONE, was the guest speaker at the Change of Command, which was attended by ship's company and distinguished guests from many U. S. Military Commands in the Far East.