



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35)
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From: Commanding Officer, USS MONTICELLO (LSD 35)
To: Director of Naval History (OP 09BH), Washington Navy Yard, Washington,
DC 20374

Subj: SUBMISSION OF COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

Encl: (1) USS MONTICELLO's Command History

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


G. W. ERTEL

USS MONTICELLO COMMAND HISTORY 1985

As 1985 opened the crew of USS MONTICELLO was making final preparations for a fast paced month of pre-deployment training.

Only seven days into the new year, MONTICELLO underwent a one week Refresher Training Assessment (7-11 January). Although not a full cycle Interim Refresher Training, the crew of MONTICELLO was able to successfully complete a vigorous training assistance visit.

On January 14, MONTICELLO put to sea again for two weeks of Amphibious Refresher Training (14-25 January). Faulty radars and heavy coastal fog at first led to frustration in not being able to perform for the observers. The initial week ended with a successful boated assault on the Silver Strand of Coronado, California. After two weeks of pre-dawn, morning, late afternoon and evening H-Hours, MONTICELLO completed Amphibious Refresher Training with a grade of outstanding on the Final Battle Problem and an overall grade of excellent.

The two weeks of Amphibious Refresher Training introduced new skills to the crew. These included a new concept of LVT launching, which called for the launch ship to proceed directly for a beach, do a 180 degree turn at the line of departure, and launch all LVT's within a prescribed time and distance and training with the Seafox, a small special warfare craft, as the Primary Control Ship (PCS). The concept had been used numerous times in Seventh Fleet, but had not, until now, been utilized in Eastern Pacific Training.

February and March were spent inport San Diego undergoing predeployment availabilities with SIMA, San Diego and USS CAPE COD (AD 43).

On 27 March 1985, just two days before celebrating her 28th birthday, USS MONTICELLO, as flagship for CTG 36.8, left San Diego for her nineteenth and final deployment to the Western Pacific. Joining USS ANCHORAGE (LSD 36) approximately 100 miles west of San Diego, the two ship task group sailed non-stop for three weeks, passing through the Hawaiian Island Chain before arriving for a brief stop at Sasebo, Japan on 15 April.

Stopping long enough to offload a diplomatic attache boat which the crew nicknamed "Gulliver", MONTICELLO pulled out of Sasebo before noon on the 15th of April and steamed overnight for Pohang, South Korea.

Arriving in Pohang on 16 April, MONTICELLO and ANCHORAGE backloaded the remaining elements of BLT 1/6 which had participated in Team Spirit '85.

Leaving Pohang on 17 April, MONTICELLO and Anchorage sailed for White Beach, Okinawa arriving on 20 April. While inport White Beach, MONTICELLO offloaded her elements of BLT 1/6 and onloaded elements of BLT 1/3.

Departing White Beach on 22 April, MONTICELLO arrived in Subic Bay, RP on 25 April for a one week upkeep prior to Exercise Balikatan 85, a joint US-Republic of the Philippines Amphibious Exercise.

Joining ANCHORAGE and USS ST LOUIS (LKA 116), MONTICELLO departed Subic Bay on 2 May, as part of Task Force 760, for Dingalen Bay on the east coast of Luzon Island, and BALIKATAN '85. During the 10 day exercise, MONTICELLO acted as Primary Control Ship, and controlled all seven waves to an on time, on center beach landing.

Arriving back in Subic Bay on 12 May, MONTICELLO entered a three week upkeep, her last in Seventh Fleet. Not requiring any major repairs, MONTICELLO used the time to begin preparations for her pending decommissioning. In addition to ship's preservation, the MONTICELLO crew used their inport time to assist in repairing two local school houses, a

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refugee center, and handed out numerous cases of food and medical supplies.

MONTICELLO left Subic Bay for the last time on 1 June, and headed for Hong Kong, BCC, arriving on 3 June.

While in Hong Kong, the crew took maximum advantage of their liberty to sightsee and shop the many bargains of the Orient. In addition, the officers of the MONTICELLO and BLT 1/3 hosted Royal Navy, Marine, and Army Officers from HMS TAMAR in a luncheon onboard.

Leaving Hong Kong on 8 June, MONTICELLO headed back to White Beach, arriving on 10 June. After off-loading BLT 1/3, MONTICELLO headed for Naha, Okinawa to onload Marine retrograde equipment for return to CONUS.

Completing the onload in Naha on 12 June, MONTICELLO left for her return to San Diego. Enroute back, MONTICELLO passed near Iwo Jima, the scene of one of the bloodiest amphibious assaults of World War II.

Arriving in Pearl Harbor on 24 June, MONTICELLO embarked a number of "Tigers" for the cruise back to San Diego, and loaded approximately 90 private vehicles under the opportune lift program.

Sailing with the USS ACADIA (AD 42), MONTICELLO left Pearl Harbor on 26 June, for a seven day transit to San Diego, arriving home for the last time on 3 July.

Whereas most ships enjoy a standdown after return from deployment, the crew of MONTICELLO busied themselves preparing for a change of command. On 8 July, Commander James A. Hough was relieved as Commanding Officer by Commander Gregory W. Ertel.

The remainder of July and the months of August and September were busily spent preserving spaces, transferring equipment, parts, and crew; all in preparation for decommissioning.

The jobs were at times arduous and difficult, the hours and days were long, but on 30 September the final results were achieved, when in a formal ceremony at Pier 8, Naval Station, San Diego, Commander G. W. Ertel and his crew handed their ship over to representatives of the Naval Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility of Bremerton, WA.