



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6)

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From: Commanding Officer, USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6)

To: Director of Naval History

Subj: USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) COMMAND HISTORY 1998

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) Command History 1998

1. Per reference (a) find enclosure (1) as subject matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. A. YNGVE".

R. A. YNGVE
By direction

From: USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6)

To: Director, Naval Historical Center

Subj: USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) COMMAND HISTORY 1998

Encl: (1) Commissioning Book
(2) Welcome Aboard Brochure
(3) Ship's Photograph
(4) Department Milestones

1. Command Composition and Organization. Captain Douglas W. Keith, United States Navy, commands USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6), the Navy's newest Multipurpose Amphibious Assault ship. The ship is assigned to Amphibious Group THREE, homeported in San Diego, California. USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) is a member of the WASP (LHD 1) Class Multipurpose Amphibious Assault ship. An improvement on the TARAWA (LHA 1) Class Amphibious Assault ship, LHDs are designed for use as the flagship of an Amphibious Ready Group.

2. Chronology. The name USS BONHOMME RICHARD was first given to a warship during the Revolutionary War. While Captain John Paul Jones was in France he obtained the ship DUC DE DURAS from the King of France for use in operations against the British. The ship was overhauled and renamed BONHOMME RICHARD by Captain Jones, from the pen name of his friend Benjamin Franklin use used in France while he was the United States Ambassador.

3. Narrative. Originally tasked to support a raid on the English mainland, an operation that was canceled, USS BONHOMME RICHARD was diverted for use as a commerce raider off the coast of Ireland. On her return to France from the Irish coast, BONHOMME RICHARD encountered the British ships HMS SERAPIS and HMS COUNTESS OF SCARBOUROUGH off Flamborough Head, England, and a battle ensued. It is during this battle that Jones delivered his legendary response to the British demand that he surrender. He said, "I have not yet begun to fight!" HMS SERAPIS was captured after a furious battle that lasted all day on into the night. The morning after the battle, Jones transferred his flag to HMS SERAPIS where he watched the severely damaged USS BONHOMME RICHARD sink.

On November 26, 1944, the second ship to bear the name USS BON HOMME RICHARD, an aircraft carrier, was commissioned at the New York Yard as CV 31. USS BON HOMME RICHARD immediately departed for use in the Pacific Theater. Before the end of World War II USS BON HOMME RICHARD participated in action throughout the Pacific Theater of Operations.

After being placed in a reserve status following World War II, USS BON HOMME RICHARD was reactivated for use in the Korean War, making three deployments to the Korean Peninsula. After her second deployment to Korea she received a major overhaul and was redesignated CVA-31 to note the improvements made for strike warfare, the 'A' meaning attack. Remaining with the Fleet after the Korean War, USS BON HOMME RICHARD participated in the Vietnam War, making multiple deployments from 1960s until it's final deployment in 1970. The USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31) was decommissioned July 2, 1971 and was stricken from the Naval register.

The construction of the present USS BONHOMME RICHARD began in July 1994 at Ingalls Shipbuilding, a division of Litton Industries, in Pascagoula, Mississippi. The mast was stepped November 12, 1996, and coins placed uner the mast. The ship was christened on May 17, 1997, with Mrs. Joyce Murtha, wife of The Honorable Mr. John P. Murtha, Representative to Congress from the 12th Congressional District of Pennsylvania, as ship's sponsor. USS BONHOMME RICHARD was commissioned on August 15, 1998 in Pensacola, Florida.

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT COMMAND HISTORY

Command History (1998)

- 22 Jan - 26 Jan: Builders Trials.
- 27 Jan - 30 Jan: Builders Sea Trials.
- 17 Feb - 20 Feb: ATG Engineering Training Team Course of Instruction.
- 16 Mar - 18 Feb: Acceptance Trials.
- 29 Apr - 30 Apr: PMS phase II installs.
- 09-10 May: Move Aboard: Inport Pascagoula, MS. Majority of Crew moved aboard BONHOMME RICHARD in Pascagoula.
- 11 May: Conducted Sea trials (Departed A.M. arrived P.M.).
- 12 May - 05 Aug: Post Delivery.
- 15 May: Small Arms load.
- 19 May - 22 May: Afloat Training Group (ATG) Shipboard training Team Course of Instruction. ATG came aboard to train BONHOMME RICHARD'S training teams on how to train the crew and how to conduct stand alone training and integrated training between training teams.

- 26 May - 29 May: **Afloat training Group Engineering Limited Team**
Training: Inport Pascagoula, MS. Limited Training Team visited in support of BONHOMME RICHARD'S scheduled Pre light-off Assessment (PLOA) and Tailored Ship's Training availability (TSTA). Training was focused on strengthening weak areas that needed improvement to acceptable levels during previously scheduled training. BHR is used the LTT as a proactive means of training personnel.
- 27 May - 29 May: Pre Combat Systems Ship Qualification Trials Coordination Visit.
- 01 June - 05 Jun: **Aviation Handling Assist Team:** Conducted by COMPHIBGRU THREE N42. Trained flight deck personnel in Aviation Handling and Flight Ops. Reviewed Aviation Fuel System and some material.
- 01 June - 05 Jun: **COMPHIBGRU THREE-Engineering Assist Visit.** Engineers from COMPHIBGRU THREE provided grooming and guidance in preparation for the ship's Pre-Lite off training Phase II.

- 02 June - 05 Jun: **Crew Certification Phase I.** Inport Pascagoula, MS. Inspected by COMPHIBGRU THREE. Evaluated the crew's ability to operate BONHOMME Richard safely at sea. This portion of the Crew Cert process reviewed manning, documentation (instructions, etc), training programs, Engineering Equipment Status, and looked at how the ship was progressing towards getting ready for sail-around.
- 08 Jun - 12 Jun: **Pre-Lite Off Training (Phase II).** Inport Pascagoula, MS. ATG trainers came to Pascagoula and assisted the Engineering Training Team in preparing the crew for Light-Off Assessment.
- 08 Jun - 12 Jun: **Afloat Training Group Supply Assist**
- 08 Jun - 12 Jun: **Limited Team Trainer (OS, GM, BM, DC)**
- 16 Jun - 20 Jun: **Explosive Safety Inspection and Assist Visit (ESIAV).** Inport Pascagoula, MS
Inspectors assisted ship's crew in preparing Ammunition and Explosive Storage Areas / equipment for the Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection (SESI). They also certified BONHOMME RICHARD to carry a small amount of ammunition during ship's transit to San Diego.

- 22 Jun - 24 Jun: **SURFACE RESCUE TEAM TRAINER.** Inport Pascagoula, MS. Exported team training designed to train the boat davit and forecastle (deck recovery) teams in proper equipment, rigging and procedures for a safe shipboard SAR evolution. Ship's rescue swimmers were evaluated on six rescues conducted in the water: 3 forecastle and 3 boat recoveries.
- 22 Jun - 24 Jun: **CPG-3 Engineering PRE-LOA Visit.** COMPHIBGRU THREE assessed engineering training team/crew training and material readiness in preparation for Lite-Off Assessment.
- 22 Jun - 26 Jun: **Pre-CSSQT/LOGSAT/PUBSAT Visit.** Inport Pascagoula, MS. Trainers and technicians were onboard to help BONHOMME RICHARD prepare for October's Combat Systems Ship Qualifications Trial. Ship's Logs and Pubs were inventoried.
- 24 Jun - 26 Jun: **UNREP SQT.** Inport Pascagoula, MS. Inspection to ensure ship's UNREP equipment is in satisfactory condition and crew members are trained to handle the equipment.

- 29 Jun - 03 Jul: **Pre-Lite Off Training (Phase III)**. Inport Pascagoula, MS. ATG trainers provided another assist visit for the Engineering Training Team and Crew to help prepare for Light-Off Assessment.
- 29 Jun - 30 Jun: ELB Shipcheck
- 14 Jul - 17 Jul: **Lite-Off Assessment (LOA)**. Inport Pascagoula, MS. Propulsion Examining Board inspected ship's engineering systems and crew training to ensure engineering plant/crew was qualified to operate safely. The Inspection was satisfactory.
- 20 Jul - 24 Jul: **ASIR/ARE/Well Deck Cert.** Inport Pascagoula, MS. Inspectors evaluated the condition of the ship's flight deck, associated equipment, and crew training to ensure the ship was qualified to conduct aviation operations safely. A similar inspection was conducted to ensure the ship was qualified to operate amphibious vehicles during Well Deck operations.

- 21 Jul - 22 Jul: **Well deck Certification.** Conducted by COMNAVBEACHGRU ONE N7 shop. Material Review of Welldeck Systems and training qualifications with LCAC focus. Systems such as Welldeck lighting, fueling systems, gripes, emergency recovery of LCAC equipment, etc. were inspected. Well Deck was certified.

- 29 Jul - 31 Jul: **Crew Certification Phase II.** Inport Pascagoula, MS.COMPHIBGRU 3 Inspectors will confirm implementation of plans and programs reviewed during Phase I. The evaluation focused on safety in the areas of ship control and casualty/emergency procedures. The final two days of this visit will encompass a Fast Cruise.

- 01 Aug: **Small Arms Ammo Load**

- 06 Aug - 07 Aug: **Sea Trials. FIRST UNDERWAY PERIOD.** Final shakedown of ship's systems in preparation for sail-around. A One day event, from which we returned to Pascagoula in the evening. Underway the 6th, returned the 7th.

- 06 Aug - 11 Aug: **Limited Team Trainer** for Boatswain's Mates and Quartermasters.
- 08 Aug - 16 Aug: Visit Pensacola in preparations for commissioning.
- 10 Aug **COMMISSIONED WITOUT Ceremony**
- 15 Aug: **COMMISSIONING**
- 17 Aug: Underway for Rio De Janiero and commenced transit around South America.
- 17 Aug - 30 Aug: Transit to Rio De Janiero, Brazil (Arrive Monday, 31 Aug)
- 31 Aug - 02 Sep: Visited Rio De Janiero, Brazil
- 07 Sep: Passing Exercise with UNITAS deployers.
Conducted Division Tactics
- 03 Sep - 12 Sep: Transited to Valparaiso Chile (Arrive Saturday, 12 Sep)
- 12 Sep - 15 Sep: Visited Valparaiso Chile
- 16 Sep - 27 Sep: Transited to San Diego

- 21 Sep: Chopped to 3rd Fleet for the first time.
- 28 Sep: Arrived San Diego
- 28 Sep - 12 Oct: IMAV/Upkeep San Diego
- 13 Oct - 18 Oct: Type Training in Southern California Operating Area. Conducted AV-8 Harrier operations. Moored pierside 18 October.
- 19 Oct - 23 Oct: **COMMAND ASSESSMENT OF READINESS AND TRAINING (CART II) (inport San Diego)**. Purpose was for COMPHIBGRU THREE/ATG/Ship team to conduct a performance-based assessment of BONHOMME RICHARD'S readiness and established a baseline of proficiency for the ship's training teams and watch sections.
- 24 Oct - 08 Nov: Upkeep in San Diego
- 26 Oct - 06 Nov: **Combat Systems Ship Qualification Trials (CSSQT) Inport**. Two weeks inport followed by two weeks underway.
- 09 Nov - 13 Nov: **Combat Systems Ship Qualifications Trials (CSSQT) Underway**. Ship conducted Deck Landing Qualifications and Detect to engage sequences with Lear aircraft. Recovered 2 LCACs and

conducted PLARS testing.

- 14 Nov - 15 Nov: Upkeep in San Diego

- 16 Nov - 20 Nov: **Combat Systems Ship Qualifications Trials (CSSQT) Underway and Tailored Ship's Training Availability I (TSTA I).** Ship conducted detect to engage sequences on Lear aircraft and fired for the first time its Close in Weapons System (CIWS), Rolling Airframe Missiles (RAM), and Nato Sea Sparrow Missile System. ATG trained the ship's training teams, conducted deckplate training, and worked on basic warfare skills. Training teams tested the crew.

- 21 Nov - 29 Nov: Upkeep in San Diego

- 30 Nov - 04 Dec: **Tailored Ship's Training Availability I (TSTA I underway).**

- 05 Dec - 06 Dec: Upkeep in San Diego

- 07 Dec: TSTA II Inport

- 08 Dec - 11 Dec: **Tailored Ship's Training Availability II (TSTA II underway)**. ATG worked with the training teams to refine skills and integrate watch teams into single organizations capable of coordinating their efforts. Ship's training teams trained the crew under the guidance of ATG.
- 12 Dec - 13 Dec: Upkeep in San Diego
- 14 Dec: TSTA II Inport
- 15 Dec - 18 Dec: **Tailored Ship's Training Availability II (TSTA I underway)**.
- 18 Dec - 31 Dec: Holiday Standdown

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT COMMAND HISTORY
15 AUG - 31 DEC 98

DATE	DIVISIO N	EVENT
10 AUG	S7	Command Postal Audit By LT [REDACTED] & LTjg [REDACTED]
15 AUG	S5	Ship's Commissioning
17 AUG	S5	Ship's Rider
17 AUG	S2	Ship's Rider "The Horn"
17-31 AUG	S5	Afloat Training Group Visit
20-25 AUG	S10	HICS Computer Installation
26 AUG	ALL	Crossing The Line
01 SEP	S5	Rio De Janiero (Port Visit)
03-11 SEP	S7	ATG Assist Visit By PNCM [REDACTED] & Dk1 [REDACTED] & Ship's Store
03-13 SEP	S8/S10	ATG Logistics Limited Training Team Visit
10 SEP	S2	"Pacific Meal Theme"
13-15 SEP	S5	Valparaiso, Chile (Port Visit)
19 SEP	S7	Command Postal Audit By CWO3 [REDACTED] & LTjg [REDACTED]
20 SEP	S2/S5	"Steel Beach Picnic"
23 SEP	S2	219 th Battle Of "Flamborough Head"
24-26 SEP	S2	Hispanic Meal
27 SEP	S2	"Coney Island Night"
1 OCT	S3	\$36,000 profit transfer to MWR - First MWR profits.
29 OCT	S7	Command Postal Audit By LT [REDACTED] & LTjg [REDACTED]
2-6 NOV	S2/S5	Navy Food Management Team Visit
03 NOV	S7	TYCOM Assist Visit By PCC [REDACTED] & PCC [REDACTED]
4 NOV 98	S6	AVCAL (850 Parts Loaded)
9-13 NOV	S5	Guests Of The Navy Cruise Program
9-13 NOV	S8	Integrated Barcode System Installation And Assist Visit
10 NOV	S2	Marine Corps Birthday Cake and Celebration
16-20 NOV	S5	Scientists To Sea
16-20 NOV	S4	Integrated Automated Travel System (Iats) Fleetwide Upgrade 5.1 And Training
23 -25 NOV	S4	COMNAVBASE Assist Audit By Mr. Shorter, Mr. Ressurrection, & Mr. Guitierrez.
23-26 NOV	S10	HICS Assist Visit
27 NOV	S2/S5	Ship's First Thanksgiving Dinner
NOV-DEC	S6	Meetings Between CNAP, CNSP, BHR, & Embarking Marines
1-7 DEC	S8	Integrated Barcode System Assist Visit(Work Out The Kinks)
04 DEC	S2/S5	Command Holiday (Christmas) Party

24 DEC	S2	Christmas Dinner
25 DEC	S5	Christmas Party
12 DEC	S2/S5	Children Christmas Party
30 DEC	S7	Command Postal Audit By LT [REDACTED] & CWO3 [REDACTED]
DEC-98	S6	50% Of AVCAL Received And Stowed By The End Of Dec 98

15 JAN 99	S2	Ceremonial Observance Of Dr. King's Birthday On Messdecks
25 JAN 99	S2	Final Contract Trials
25JAN 99	S5	Final Contract Trial (FCT
27 JAN	S7	Command Postal Audit By LT [REDACTED] & CWO3 [REDACTED]
29 JAN 99	S5	Change Of Command Cpg3
29 JAN 99	S2	Cpg3 Change Of Command
07 FEB 99	S2	Installation And Introduction Of New Coffee Machine
4 FEB 99	S6	NALCOMIS Installed And Operational
10 FEB 99	S2	Installation And Introduction Of New (Slurpy) Bubler Machine

COMMUNICATIONS COMMAND HISTORY

- 10 AUG 98 The Communications Department was established with 3 Officers and 68 enlisted men and women, this included the introduction of the ADP Division (formerly in Supply Department) as a precursor to the merge of the RM and DP ratings.
- 10 AUG 98 USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) Commissioned without ceremony in Pascagoula, Mississippi. STROFAC Routing Indicator (RUHPBHR) became effective at 100001Z AUG 98.
- AUG 98 The subject of the first message transmitted from USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) was "Commissioning without Ceremony". Exact Date-Time-Group is unknown.
- 08 SEP 98 Established first Task Group Teletype Net with USS MOOSBRUGGER (DD-980), USS DOYLE (FFG-39) and USS LA MOURE COUNTY(LST-1194). Net was established during Commissioning transit to homeport from NAS PENSACOLA FL to 32ND Street San Diego Naval Station as part of UNITAS 39-98.
- NOV 98 Configured and demonstrated the first Telemedicine circuit from a LHD Wasp Class ship to Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland.
- 29 NOV 98 Established the USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) Unclassified Internet Protocol Routing Network (NIPRNET) Homepage.
- JAN 99 Installation of the Secure Voice Switch (SA-2112(V)1). Purpose: Increase the total number of remote phone capability for radio circuits to five.
- JAN 989 Upgraded the Marconi Receivers and Transmitter Faceplates (URC-109). Purpose: Digital upgrade to HF Receivers and Transmitters from Analog Faceplates.
- 14 JAN 99 Renamed the Joint Message Center (JMC) to Joint Network Operations Center (JNOC). Combined the functions of Local Area Network (LAN) Operational Management, Shipboard Non-tactical Automated Data Processor (SNAP) functions and Radio message processing functions into a single work center.
- 26 JAN 99 Received its first Communications Fast Reaction Test Message (BEARD IRON) from COMTHIRDFLT 261642Z JAN 99. Exercise graded satisfactory by establishing contact with CINCPACFLT COMMAND CENTER, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii within 5 minutes.

- 8 FEB 99 Installed the first operational LHD Wasp Class Wireless Local Area Network (LAN) onboard USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6).

COMMAND HISTORY (AIMD)

IM01 DIVISION

- Successfully implemented NALCOMIS that will provide a modern, real time, responsive, computer based management information system. The system will also increase aircraft readiness by providing local maintenance and supply managers with timely and accurate information required in the day-to-day management and decision making process, reduce the administrative burdens on to the fleet and improve the quality of upline reported data.
- Implemented the Support Equipment Standardization System (SESS) for 2 divisions which will provide automated methods for inventory tracking and reporting, PM scheduling, TD accounting, subcustody management and accurate and timely reports.
- Successfully entered and made numerous improvements during the Final Contractor Trials. Identified safety lines and courses for the Bridge Crane, which were subsequently installed. Identified need for additional McKissick blocks for the AV8 Vans that were ordered and received. This will improve movement of subject vans as well as in a safer manner.
- Completed TSTA II/III. AIMD personnel manned Repair Locker 1H and performed superbly, directly contributing to the ships successful evaluation during this high OPTEMPO period.
- Successfully implemented the AV 3M program with the assistance of SPAWAR and COMNAVAIRPAC. First aviation data submitted upline that will provide maintenance managers with their first look at necessary Maintenance Data Reports that will contribute and assist in the manipulation of assets.

IM02

- Provided outstanding customer service for various Departments. Specific services include:
 1. Repaired 2 AH-1 dollies for Air Department.
 2. Manufactured vent covers, coffeepot stands, printer stands, fuel sample holders, and computer holders.
 3. Welded crack on ship's boat skids normally repaired at SIMA.
 4. Performed emergency reclamation to 90 AFFF contaminated A/C and SE tires for Supply Department.
- Repaired structure shop band saw and power plants pneumatic hoist.
- Qualified 6 personnel on operation of NAN-4 Cart.

IM03

- Test and checked checked two AN/ARA63 systems for the ship's AN/SPN-41 radar system.
- Achieved 98.5% completion for 3rd Quarter 3M PMS

- Performed comprehensive Technical Publication audit by 'page-checking' over 1000 publications.
- Received accolades from Combat Cargo for their exceptional job completion when AIMD had 'Common area' tasking.
- Generated Incidental Users list for AIMD's Laser Program.
- 80% of division personnel completed NALCOMIS familiarization course.
- All divisional personnel watchstation qualified.
- Calibrated/repaired 70 various items including performing numerous onsites for other departments.
- Completed Local Assets Management System(LAMS) set up for IMRL items. Reconciled over 100 discrepancies.

IM04

- Reworked over 80 TD-1A Tiedown chains.
- Reworked and brought to operational status O2 cart.
- Made CC carts and spotting dollies operational by incorporating necessary configuration changes.
- Received grade of outstanding on material condition of forklifts from INSURV inspectors/evaluators.
- Completed 64 scheduled PM's and over 20 unscheduled maintenance actions.
- Aggressively pursued and received needed items, i.e., Technical directives, MRC's, publications, etc., by communicating directly with NAWC.