



*Rec'd 1/31/96*  
**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41)  
FPO NEW YORK 09591-1729

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5757  
Ser LSD41/005  
12 Jan 96

From: Commanding Officer, USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41)  
To: Director, Naval History (NO9BH), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, DC 20374-0571

Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5720.12E

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Chronology  
(3) Narrative  
(4) Supporting Documents

1. In accordance with requirements set forth in reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted for the period 01 January 1995 to 31 December 1995.

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
F. B. MCNIGHT

Copy to:  
COMPHIBGRU TWO

## SHIP'S MISSION

The mission of USS WHIDBEY ISLAND is to conduct prompt, sustained combat operations at sea, worldwide, in support of national policy. Designed, built and manned to carry MANEUVER WARFARE and the "over the horizon" amphibious assault, as part of an Amphibious Task Group, WHIDBEY ISLAND can carry four (4) Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC's) in its flood-able well, serve as the Primary Control Ship during an assault and provide a boat haven with docking, repair and fueling services for landing craft and boats. In short, WHIDBEY ISLAND is ideally suited to support our Navy's foremost strike asset...the U.S. Marine!

The WHIDBEY ISLAND class introduces to the fleet significant improvements with updated communications, combat systems, 20 and 60 ton cranes, expanded repair shops, two helicopter landing spots, completed medical and dental facilities, automated computer-based logistic support and an impressive engineering plant that gives WHIDBEY ISLAND an excellent capability for self sufficient operations. Equally effective in peace time as in wartime, WHIDBEY ISLAND is well suited to carry out a variety of humanitarian missions such as evacuations and disaster relief.

With primary missions of Amphibious Warfare, Mobility, Command and Control, and Anti-Air Warfare, WHIDBEY ISLAND is designed to support Special Warfare, Fleet Support Operations (refueling other ships), non-combatant operations, Ocean Surveillance and Electronic Warfare. Clearly a multi-mission capable ship, WHIDBEY ISLAND's crew, embarked Marines and detachments must also be, and are multi-talented. Representing almost every state in the Union, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Philippines, we all are privileged and proud to serve in WHIDBEY ISLAND.

Enclosure (1)

JANUARY

1 - 8 JAN CHRISTMAS STANDDOWN LEAVE PERIOD 2

8 JAN BASCOLEX STUDENTS ARRIVE

9 JAN COMPHIBGRU FOUR, COMMODORE BUCHANAN ARRIVES/  
PRESAIL CONFERENCE

10 JAN UNDERWAY FOR TCAT 1-95/BREAKOUT EXERCISE/  
EMBARK LCAC'S/RENDEZVOUS WITH USS SHREVEPORT/  
CIWS EXERCISE

11 - 13 JAN AAV OPERATIONS

11 JAN BASCOLEX STUDENTS DEPART/ANCHOR ONSLOW BAY NC/  
AAV'S LAUNCHED (STATIC/TURNAWAY)/LCAC'S LAUNCHED/  
AAV'S AND LCAC'S RECOVERED

12 JAN AAV'S LAUNCHED/UNDERWAY AT VARIOUS SPEEDS/  
DECEPTIVE LIGHTING DRILL/AAV'S RECOVERED

14 JAN CLOSE-IN REFUELING WITH USS DEYO (DD-989)

15 JAN UNDERWAY LAUNCHES OF AAV'S AT 5, 12 & 15 KTS

17 JAN DEBARK LCAC'S/RETURN TO LITTLE CREEK

18 - 27 JAN AVIATION ALTERATION

19 JAN E-7 NAVYWIDE EXAMS

20 JAN CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

23 - 26 JAN DPMA SHIP CHECKS/I-DIVISION

23 JAN PETTY OFFICER INDOCTRINATION/EWTGLANT SHIP TOUR

26 JAN COMCARGRU SIX, ADM BOWMAN VISIT/AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE  
SCHOOL STUDENT TOUR

27 JAN REENLISTMENT OF BM2 [REDACTED]

30 JAN UNDERWAY (DEGAUSSING RUN)/INPORT LITTLE CREEK

31 JAN STRONG RESOLVE PRE-SAIL CONFERENCE (EWTGLANT)

Enclosure (2)

FEBRUARY

1 - 5 FEB INPORT LITTLE CREEK/ONLOAD STORES

3 FEB TROOP HABITABILITY INSPECTION/BERTH SHIFT/  
EMBARK LCAC'S

9 FEB UNDERWAY FOR MOREHEAD CITY, N.C./COMMENCE EXERCISE  
STRONG RESOLVE (9 FEB 95 - 5 APR 95)/GQ MSFD/  
EMBARK LCAC'S

10 FEB ARRIVE MOREHEAD CITY/ONLOAD MARINES/LAUNCH LCAC'S/  
RECOVER LCAC'S/RENDEZVOUS FOR TRANSLANT STEAMING

11 - 23 FEB UNDERWAY WITH USS WASP (LHD-1) AND USS SHREVEPORT  
(LPD-12) FOR TRANSLANT STEAMING

11 FEB MAN OVERBOARD DRILL/EEBD EGRESS TRAINING/GENERAL  
QUARTERS/ABANDON SHIP DRILL

12 FEB COLD WEATHER TRAINING (SITE TV)

14 FEB ZIG-ZAG DRILL/FLIGHT CRASH DRILL/GQ MSFD

15 FEB SPECIAL INCIDENT REPORTING DRILL

16 FEB TACTICAL MANEUVERING DRILL

17 FEB UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS PLATTE (AO-186)

18 FEB AMMO HANDLING (SMALL ARMS TRANSFER)

20 FEB MASS CASUALTY DRILL

21 FEB BATTLE PROBLEM/CHAFF LAUNCH

23 FEB INPORT ROTA SPAIN/REFUEL/COMPHIBGRU TWO, ADM PICOTTE,  
VISIT/UNDERWAY

25 FEB TACTICAL MANEUVERING EXERCISE

27 FEB ENGLISH CHANNEL TRANSIT

27 - 28 FEB I-DIVISION

MARCH

1 MAR REENLISTMENT OF RM3 [REDACTED]

3 MAR UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS JOHN LENTHAL

4 MAR MINE WATCH SET

5 - 9 MAR LCAC'S OPERATIONS

5 MAR D-DAY OF AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT/LCAC SERIAL  
CALL/OFFLOAD OF TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT

7 MAR E-4 NAVYWIDE EXAMS/CO DEPARTS WHIDBEY ISLAND VIA  
STERNGATE FOR USS WASP (LHD-1)/CO RETURNS WITH  
COMPHIBRON FOUR/CAPTAIN'S CALL

9 MAR E-5 NAVYWIDE EXAMS

10 - 12 MAR INPORT TRONDHEIM, NORWAY

12 MAR UNDERWAY FOR ENGLISH CHANNEL

14 MAR E-6 NAVYWIDE EXAM

15 MAR ANCHORED/UNDERWAY

16 - 21 MAR INPORT STAVANGER, NORWAY

17 MAR REFUEL/STORES ONLOAD

21 - 31 MAR UNDERWAY WITH USS WASP (LHD-1) AND USS SHREVEPORT  
(LPD-12) FOR MOREHEAD CITY, N.C.

21 MAR PRELIMINARY INSPECTION OF TROOP SPACES PRIOR TO  
TURNOVER/GENERAL QUARTERS

26 MAR HEAT STRESS AND HEARING CONSERVATION TRAINING  
(SITE TV)/FLIGHT DECK PICNIC

29 MAR UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT/COMPHIBRON FOUR VISIT

30 MAR SMALL ARMS FIRE/CIWS TRACKEX

31 MAR CIWS UPLOAD/CIWS PACFIRE/25MM PACFIRE/SMALL ARMS  
FIRE/REENLISTMENT OF RM2 [REDACTED]

APRIL

1 - 3 APR ENROUTE MOREHEAD CITY, N.C.

1 APR TROOP HABITABILITY INSPECTION

3 APR DEBARK LCAC'S

4 APR INPORT MOREHEAD CITY FOR OFFLOAD OF 26TH MEU  
ELEMENTS/EMBARK NAVY LEAGUE RIDERS AND NJROTC  
STUDENTS FOR TIGER CRUISE/UNDERWAY FOR LITTLE  
CREEK, VA

5 APR CONCLUDE EXERCISE STRONG RESOLVE/INPORT LITTLE  
CREEK, VA

7 APR FROCKING CEREMONY/REENLISTMENT OF RM2 [REDACTED]

10 APR EMBARK ENGINEERING TRAINING GROUP (ETG)/EMBARK  
SOSMRC/ETG AND SOSMRC IN-BRIEFS/EMBARK SSRNM  
RIDERS/U.S. ARMY HELO OPERATIONS

11 - 12 APR UNDERWAY FOR VACAPES OPAREA WITH ETG/ENGINEERING  
ORAL BOARDS

12 APR ENGINEERING FULL POWER DEMONSTRATION

13 APR FRESHWATER WASHDOWN/DEGAUSSING RUN/INPORT LITTLE  
CREEK/ETG AND SOSMRC OUT-BRIEFS

17 APR COMMENCE IMAV/LMA ASSIST/EOW BOARD (LT AYERS)

19 - 20 APR I-DIVISION

19 APR COMPHIBRON TWO, CAPT YOUNG, EMBARKED/COMMENCE SNAP  
III INSTALLATION/COMEX/CICEX

20 APR COMPHIBGRU TWO, RADM PICOTTE, MEETING WITH CO

24 - 28 APR SCLISIS VISIT/DIESEL INSPECTION/ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH INSPECTION/TARGET (CSRR/CSMCR)/LMA ASSIST

28 APR REENLISTMENT OF ET2 [REDACTED]

MAY

1 - 5 MAY TARGET (CSRR/CSMCR)/INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE SURVEY  
2 MAY COMMAND RETENTION ASSESSMENT  
4 MAY SECURITY ASSIST  
5 MAY TYCOMMEX ASSIST/CO'S MEETING WITH COMMAND  
AMPHIBIOUS GROUP TWO/INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE SURVEY  
OUTBRIEF  
8 - 12 MAY SITE TV 400 INSTALLATION/NMSS INSTALLATION/  
8 MAY TROOP HABITABILITY INSPECTION  
9 MAY EXTERNAL RADIATION AUDIT/REENLISTMENT OF EN1 [REDACTED]  
10 MAY WEIGHT TEST 60 TON CRANE/SPOUSE APPRECIATION  
CEREMONY/CMS ASSIST  
12 MAY EXCHANGE SMALL BOATS/FAST CRUISE  
15 MAY FAST CRUISE/BASCOLEX STUDENTS ARRIVE/ADVANCE TCAT  
TEAM EMBARK/HURREX-95  
16 - 24 MAY UNDERWAY FOR TCAT 5-95  
16 MAY ANCHORED SEAWARD OF BAY BRIDGE/EMBARK 1 LCU WITH  
LARC'S PRE-BOATED/UNDERWAY/RENDEZVOUS WITH ARG  
17 MAY MAN OVERBOARD TRAINING/LOSS OF STEERING DRILL  
18 MAY CLOSE-IN REFUELING/ABANDON SHIP DRILL  
19 - 23 MAY ANCHORED/AAV LCU OPERATIONS/UNDERWAY  
21 MAY RENDEZVOUS WITH ARG FOR SWEEP CHANNEL AND  
REHEARSAL LANDING  
23 MAY UNREP WITH JOHN LENTHALL  
24 MAY ANCHORED/UNDERWAY/INPORT LITTLE CREEK, VA  
25 MAY 20 AND 60 TON CRANE SAFETY INSPECTION  
25 - 26 MAY SAFETY STANDDOWN  
30 - 31 MAY MEDICAL READINESS INSPECTION/"I" DIVISION  
31 MAY COMPHIBRON FOUR CCO/1ST LT CONFERENCE

JUNE

1 - 5 JUN INPORT LITTLE CREEK, VA  
1 JUN FROCKING CEREMONY/TROOP SPACE INSPECTION  
1 - 2 JUN "I" DIVISION/CSRR/TARGET II  
1 - 11 JUN LANTRAMID I  
5 - 17 JUN UNDERWAY FOR JTG I&II/AAV OPERATIONS  
5 JUN ANCHOR LYNNHAVEN/EMBARK LCU  
6 JUN ANCHOR ONSLOW BAY/26TH MEU ONLOAD  
7 JUN UNDERWAY/PUBEX  
8 JUN AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT TRAINING/AAV OPERATIONS  
10 JUN MAN OVERBOARD DRILL/RENDEZVOUS WITH USS SHREVEPORT  
(LPD-12) AND USS SCOTT (DDG-995)/COMCARGRU SIX,  
ADM BOWMAN, VISIT  
11 JUN UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS JOHN LENTHALL  
13 - 15 JUN NEO EXERCISE/ANCHORED/WET WELL OPERATIONS/  
AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT TRAINING  
16 - 17 JUN DEPENDENT'S CRUISE/UNDERWAY LITTLE CREEK, VA  
17 JUN INPORT LITTLE CREEK, VA  
19 JUN REENLISTMENT CEREMONY FOR YN3 [REDACTED]/COMPHIBGRU  
TWO, RADM FLADD, VISIT  
22 JUN SEAOPS MEETING/SEAMAN TO ADMIRAL BOARD  
24 - 25 JUN VISIT SHIP  
27 JUN BRAZILIAN COMMANDER, VISIT  
26 - 30 JUN RESURFACE FORECASTLE AND RAS STATION/60 TON CRANE  
TEST



JULY

1 - 6 JUL INPORT LITTLE CREEK, VA  
3 JUL WEIGHT TEST 8000 LB ELEVATOR  
5 JUL SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBER VISIT  
6 - 24 JUL UNDERWAY FOR JTFEX 95-3/SOCEX  
6 JUL SMALL BOAT ATTACK EXERCISE/ANCHOR LYNNHAVEN/EMBARK  
TWO LCU'S/COMMENCE Q-ROUTE TRANSIT (MINEFIELD)/  
FORMATION STEAMING ENROUTE ONSLOW BAY  
7 JUL C2W EXERCISE/LAUNCH LCU'S TO RADIO ISLAND/ANCHOR  
ONSLOW BAY/EMBARK MARINES  
8 - 9 JUL AAV'S ASSAULT EXERCISES  
8 JUL SNEAK ATTACK DEFENSE/TRAINING/UNDERWAY/ANCHOR  
9 JUL UNDERWAY/LAUNCH AAV'S/UNDERWAY/ANCHOR/EDATF  
EXERCISE/RECOVER AAV'S/CRRS/SNEAK ATTACK EXERCISE  
10 JUL COMPHIBRON FOUR, COMMODORE BUCHANAN, VISIT  
11 JUL REPLENISHMENT AT SEA WITH USS BOONE (FFG-28)/  
MODIFIED FULL POWER TRIAL  
12 JUL PRE-PLANNED RESPONSE DRILLS/TORPEDO EVASION  
TACTICS EXERCISE/UNREP USS MONONGAHELA (AO-178)  
13 - 15 JUL SOCEX SUPPORT  
14 JUL COMPHIBGRU TWO, RADM FLADD VISIT (1500 - 1845)  
15 JUL CAP BOARD/MAN OVERBOARD DRILL/AT SEA FIRE DRILL  
16 - 17 JUL NON-COMBATANT EVACUATION EXERCISE/FORMATION  
STEAMING  
18 JUL ANCHOR/AAV'S OPERATIONS/UNDERWAY/UNREP USS  
MONONGAHELA (AO-178)  
21 JUL DEBARK MARINES  
23 JUL ARG OPS OFFICER MEETING (WASP)/STEEL BEACH PICNIC  
24 JUL ANCHORED/UNDERWAY/INPORT LITTLE CREEK, VA  
26 - 31 JUL 1ST PRE-OVERSEAS MOVEMENT (POM) LEAVE PERIOD

AUGUST

1 - 18 AUG INTERMEDIATE MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY (IMAV)  
1 - 8 AUG 1ST PRE-OVERSEAS MOVEMENT (POM) LEAVE PERIOD  
(CONTINUED)  
2 AUG STORES ONLOAD  
4 AUG REENLISTMENT OF FC2 [REDACTED]  
8 AUG JP-5 REFUEL  
8 - 15 AUG CHT CHEMICAL CLEANING  
9 - 12 AUG 2ND POM LEAVE PERIOD  
13 AUG RECALL OF ALL PERSONNEL DUE TO HURRICANE FELIX/  
STERN GATE INSPECTION  
15 - 20 AUG HURRICANE FELIX EVASION OPERATION  
16 AUG AT SEA FIRE PARTY DRILL  
20 - 27 AUG INPORT LITTLE CREEK, VA/CONTINUE INTERMEDIATE  
MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY (IMAV)  
22 AUG REENLISTMENT OF SH2 [REDACTED]/REFUEL/STORES ONLOAD  
24 AUG ADVANCE PARTY ARRIVAL/CARGO ONLOAD/TROOP SPACE  
TURNOVER  
28 - 31 AUG UNDERWAY FOR MEDITERRANEAN DEPLOYMENT  
28 AUG ANCHORED LYNNHAVEN/FORMATION STEAMING  
29 AUG ANCHORED ONSLOW BAY/EMBARKED ELEMENTS OF THE 26TH  
MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT (MEU)/UNDERWAY FOR THE  
MEDITERRANEAN SEA  
30 AUG UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS MERRIMACK (AO-179)/  
AT SEA FIRE PARTY TRAINING/MAN OVERBOARD DRILL/  
GENERAL QUARTERS/BURIAL AT SEA  
30 - 31 AUG "I" DIVISION

SEPTEMBER

1 - 7 SEP      TRANSATLANTIC CROSSING WITH USS WASP (LHD-1) AND  
USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12)

1 - 2 SEP      SAFETY STANDDOWN

4 - 6 SEP      "I" DIVISION

7 SEP          E-4 NAVYWIDE EXAMS/PACFIRE (CIWS/25MM/50 CAL)

9 SEP          ARG TURNOVER WITH USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3)/TRANSIT  
THE STRAITS OF GIBRALTAR

10 - 11 SEP    ENROUTE ALICANTE, SPAIN

11 - 15 SEP    INPORT ALICANTE, SPAIN

12 SEP          E-5 NAVYWIDE EXAMS

14 SEP          E-6 NAVYWIDE EXAMS/ENGINEERING OPTTEST/NAVY LEAGUE  
RECEPTION (WARDROOM)

15 SEP          UNDERWAY/RENDEZVOUS WITH ARG/CASUALTY TO #2  
EVAPORATOR

15 - 17 SEP    FORMATION STEAMING TO THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN

16 SEP          UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS KANAWAH/  
REENLISTMENT OF ENC (SW) [REDACTED]

17 SEP          ANCHORED AT CAP DE SERRAT/PRE-ASSAULT BRIEF

18 - 23 SEP    EXERCISE ATLAS HINGE

20 SEP          COMSIXTHFLT, VADM PILLING VISIT

22 SEP          #2 EVAPORATOR REPAIRED

23 SEP          UNDERWAY ENROUTE ADRIATIC SEA

24 SEP          TOWING OPERATION OF USS BUTTE (AE-27) TO AUGUSTA  
BAY, SICILY/ARRIVE AUGUSTA BAY

25 - 26 SEP    ENROUTE ADRIATIC SEA/CIWS LIVE FIRE EXERCISE

26 SEP          UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS SAN DIEGO

27 - 28 SEP    ADRIATIC SEA OPERATIONS

27 SEP          COMCARGRU SIX, RADM CROSS VISIT/REENLISTMENT OF  
PNC (SW) [REDACTED]

29 - 30 SEP    ENROUTE AEGEAN SEA

OCTOBER

1 OCT OPERATIONS IN ADRIATIC SEA WITH USS WASP (LHD-1)  
AND USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12)/CO VISITS USS WASP

2 OCT DETACHED FROM ARG ENROUTE EXERCISE ODYSSEUS 95/  
CIWS AND 50 CAL PACFIRE/EMBARK COMPHIBRON FOUR CSO  
CDR [REDACTED] AND ARG SEALS/REENLISTMENT OF OS1 [REDACTED]

3 - 12 OCT EXERCISE ODYSSEUS 95

3 OCT ARRIVE KYPRISSIA BAY, GREECE/DEPART KYPRISSIA BAY

3 - 4 OCT ENROUTE VOLOS BAY, GREECE

5 - 8 OCT ANCHORED VOLOS BAY, GREECE WITH HS SAMOS (LST-1174)

5 OCT LAUNCHED CRRC AND LCU FOR HYDRO OPS

6 OCT LUNCHEON ONBOARD HS SAMOS/STERNGATE CROSS TRAINING/  
"STEEL BEACH" PICNIC WITH HS SAMOS (LST-1174)

7 OCT BACKLOAD

8 OCT UNDERWAY ENROUTE NAFPLION BAY, GREECE/FORMATION  
STEAMING WITH HS SAMOS (LST-1174)

9 OCT IN VICINITY OF NAFPLION BAY, GREECE/AMPHIBIOUS  
ASSAULT REHEARSAL/TASMO OPS/UNDERWAY KYPRISSIA BAY

10 - 11 OCT IN VICINITY OF KYPRISSIA BAY, GREECE/ENROUTE  
ADRIATIC SEA AND RENDEZVOUS WITH ARG

12 OCT ARRIVE SOUTHERN ADRIATIC SEA WITH ARG

12 - 13 OCT ENROUTE SOUDA BAY, CRETE/"I" DIVISION

13 OCT NAVY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION/CIWS AND 50 CAL  
PACFIRE/MAN OVERBOARD DRILL/GENERAL QUARTERS

14 - 17 OCT INPORT SOUDA BAY, CRETE

17 OCT CO OF NAS SOUDA BAY VISIT/UNDERWAY

18 OCT RENDEZVOUS WITH ARG/UNREP USNS SAN DIEGO (AFS-6)

19 OCT DETACH FROM ARG ENROUTE HAIFA, ISRAEL

20 OCT ARRIVE IN VICINITY OF HAIFA, ISRAEL/LAUNCH LCU FOR  
REPAIRS IN HAIFA SHIPYARD

21 - 31 OCT EXERCISE NOBLE SHIRLEY  
21 OCT ARRIVE SIKIM OP AREA WITH ARG  
23 OCT OFFLOAD "E" COMPANY 2/6 BLT ELEMENTS  
24 OCT INPORT HAIFA, ISRAEL  
25 - 28 OCT UNDERWAY FORMATION STEAMING/ETG VISIT/BECCE'S  
26 OCT UNREP WITH USS MONONGAHELA (TAO-178)  
28 OCT VERTREP WITH USS BUTTE (AE-27)/25MM PACFIRE  
30 - 31 OCT INPORT HAIFA, ISRAEL

NOVEMBER

1 - 7 NOV INPORT HAIFA ISRAEL/INTERMEDIATE MAINTENANCE  
AVAILABILITY/MWR TOURS/PORT ENGINEER DPMA  
CONFERENCE/COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROJECTS

2 - 6 NOV BACKLOAD "E" CO 2/6 BLT TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT/  
ESWS AWARDED TO MSC (SW) ██████████ MS1 (SW) ██████████  
MR1 (SW) ██████████ EN1 (SW) ██████████ BM2 (SW) ██████████

3 NOV AMMO/CARGO ONLOAD

4 - 5 NOV LCU STERNGATE OPERATIONS FOR ONLOAD OF MARINE  
EQUIPMENT

6 NOV SHIFT TO WINTER UNIFORMS/RECOVER USMC M1A1 TANKS  
AND AAV'S

7 NOV PRESAIL CONFERENCE ONBOARD USS WASP (LHD-1)/  
NAVY WIDE SUBSTITUTE EXAM

8 - 9 NOV DEPART HAIFA ISRAEL/ENROUTE AL-AHMED, EGYPT/  
ISO EXERCISE BRIGHT STAR 95

9 NOV ANCHORED VIC AL-AHMED, EGYPT/ISO EXERCISE BRIGHT  
STAR 95/BRIGHT STAR 95 CONFERENCE ONBOARD USS WASP  
(LHD-1)

10 - 15 NOV EXERCISE BRIGHT STAR 95 IVO AL-AHMED, EGYPT

10 NOV ANCHORED VIC AL-AHMED, EGYPT/REHEARSAL LANDING/  
LAUNCH LCU 1654/LAUNCH AAV'S/PRESS POOL VISIT/  
FLIGHT OPS/EMBARK EGYPTIAN TROOPS/UNITED STATE  
MARINE CORPS 200TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

11 NOV FORMATION STEAMING/ANCHOR VIC AL-AHMED, EGYPT/  
MAIN ASSAULT LANDING/LAUNCHED AAV'S/OFF LOAD  
TF 62 VIA LCAC/ENCOUNTER EXERCISE

12 NOV COMPLETED OFF LOAD OF TF 62/ONLOAD EGYPTIAN TANKS  
VIA LCAC/UNDERWAY RECOVERY OF THREE LCAC'S OFF  
LOAD EGYPTIAN TANKS OTH VIA LCAC'S

13 NOV GQ/BECCES/I DIVISION

14 NOV WELL DECK CROSS TRAINING WITH FRENCH LCT AND  
LCU/GQ/BECCES/MSFD/I DIVISION

15 NOV EMBARK C6F RABBI, LCDR ██████████/I DIVISION

16 - 17 NOV BACK LOAD TF 62/RECOVER LCU 1654/ENROUTE AUGUSTA BAY, ITALY

17 NOV SCC CASUALTY/VERTREP FROM USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12)

18 NOV INPORT AUGUSTA BAY, ITALY/ONLOAD USMC COLD WEATHER GEAR/SHORE BUNKERING/EMBARK TECH REP ISO SCC CASUALTY

19 NOV C6F RABBI, LCDR ██████████ DEPARTS/ENROUTE PAGASSTIKOS BAY, GREECE ISO EXERCISE ALEXANDER THE GREAT

20 NOV CONT ENROUTE PAGASSTIKOS BAY, GREECE ISO EXERCISE ALEXANDER THE GREAT/SCC CASUALTY RESTORED/FORMATION STEAMING/GOOD ORDER AND DISCIPLINE STANDDOWN/THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION

21 NOV FORMATION STEAMING ICO USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12)/FLASHING LIGHT DRILL

22 - 28 NOV EXERCISE ALEXANDER THE GREAT

22 NOV ANCHORED PAGASSTIKOS BAY, GREECE/VERT REP/RAS WITH USNS SATURN/ADMIN OFF LOAD

24 NOV STERN GATE MARRIAGE CROSS TRAINING WITH HS SAMOS (LST-174), CO'S COUNSELING OF JUNIOR OFFICERS

25 NOV TOUR OF HS SAMOS (LST-174)/CO'S COUNSELING OF JUNIOR OFFICERS

26 NOV ADMIN BACK LOAD/FORMATION STEAMING ICO ALEXANDER THE GREAT PARTICIPANTS AND USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12) ISO REHEARSAL LANDING

27 NOV REHEARSAL LANDING/ENROUTE KALAMISTA BAY, GREECE ISO ASSAULT LANDING, FORMATION STEAMING ICO HELLENIC TASK GROUP AND USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12)

28 NOV ALEXANDER THE GREAT ASSAULT LANDING IVO KALAMISTA BAY, GREECE/BACK LOAD ASSAULT FORCE/UNDERWAY WITH USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12) ENROUTE ADRIATIC SEA

29 NOV ENROUTE ADRIATIC SEA

30 NOV SAFETY STAND DOWN/STEAMING IVO SOUTHERN ADRIATIC SEA

DECEMBER

1 DEC ENROUTE ADRIATIC SEA/RENDEZVOUS USS WASP (LHD 1)

2 - 4 DEC U/W ICO USS WASP (LHD 1), USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12)  
AND USS SOUTH CAROLINA (CGN 37), ADRIATIC OPAREA

2 DEC UNREP W/USNS JOHN LENTHAL

3 DEC ADVANCEMENT CEREMONY

4 DEC FAMFIRE/VERTREP USNS SATURN/TRANSIT ENROUTE  
BARI, ITALY

5 - 10 DEC INPORT BARI, ITALY

9 DEC SEMI-ANNUAL PHYSICAL READINESS TEST

11 - 29 DEC U/W ICO USS WASP (LHD 1), USS SOUTH CAROLINA  
(CGN 37) ADRIATIC SEA OPAREA ISO OPERATION  
JOINT ENDEAVOR

12 DEC UNREP W/USNS JOHN LENTHAL, GQ

14 DEC CONREP W/USNS SATURN, EMBARK 6TH FLEET  
JOURNALISTS MEDIA VISIT

15 DEC RAS W/USNS LEROY GRUMMAN, CGMARFORLANT VISIT,  
LAUNCH LCU

17 DEC LT [REDACTED] SURFACE WARFARE DENTAL OFFICER  
BOARD, LTJG [REDACTED] SURFACE WARFARE SUPPLY  
CORPS OFFICER BOARD

18 DEC CNO AND MCPON VISIT

20 DEC UNREP W/USNS JOHN LENTHAL

21 DEC DIVTACS ICO USS WASP (LHD 1), USS SHREVEPORT  
(LPD 12), USS SOUTH CAROLINA (CGN 37) AND ITS  
SAN MARCO, MPDE TREND ANALYSIS

23 DEC GQ ZEBRA CHECKS, LAUNCH LCU, CMC AND SERGEANT  
MAJOR OF THE MARINE CORPS VISIT

24 DEC COMCARGRU SIX VISIT, CHRISTMAS PLAY, ALL  
FAITH CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE

25 DEC CHRISTMAS PLAY, ALL FAITH CHRISTMAS WORSHIP  
SERVICE



26 DEC USO COMEDY SHOW  
27 DEC COMIFOR, ADM SMITH VISIT  
29 DEC UNREP W/USNS JOHN LENTHAL, FORM STEAMING ICO  
USS SHREVEPORT (LPD 12), VENICE, ITALY  
30 - 31 DEC INPORT VENICE, ITALY

## JANUARY

The month of January started out slow for the USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) but picked up momentum by mid month. Holiday stand-down continued during the first week. Shortly after the holiday stand-down period Whidbey Island hosted Marine Corps Second Lieutenants embarked for Type Commanders Amphibious Training (TCAT) 1-95. The underway period familiarized the young Marine officers with life onboard a Gator, as well as train the crew and elements of the 26th MEU for future operations. During the week of 10 - 17 January, Whidbey Island conducted TCAT in conjunction with the USS Wasp (LHD-1) and USS Shreveport (LPD-12).

TCAT 1-95 was geared toward training the crew and Marines for operations expected during Exercise Strong Resolve in Norway. Exercises conducted with Marines from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) consisted of Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV) launch and recovery, Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) operations, helicopter operations and small boat operations and were held in the vicinity of Onslow Bay, NC. Before returning to homeport Little Creek, the ship conducted an underway replenishment with USNS Big Horn.

Whidbey Island returned to homeport on 17 January. On 20 January, CDR T. E. McKnight relieved CDR J. C. Collis as Commanding Officer of USS Whidbey Island. Guests present at the change of command included Commander Amphibious Group Two; Commander Amphibious Squadron Four, and his Chief of Staff; Commanding Officer Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek; Commanding Officer,

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USS Tortuga; Commanding Officer, USS Stump; Commanding Officer, USS Ashland; and Commanding Officer, USS Shreveport.

During the week following the change of command, the ship underwent a deferred Phased Maintenance Availability, from 23 to 27 January. On 26 January Commander Carrier Group Six, Rear Admiral Bowman, visited the ship prior to her departure for the North Atlantic operations. On 30 January the ship was underway enroute to the Virginia Capes operations area to conduct additional training.

## FEBRUARY

Weather caused the delay of USS Whidbey Island's departure for Exercise Strong Resolve to the North Atlantic. The Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG) with embarked staff of Commander Amphibious Squadron FOUR did not depart Little Creek until 9 February. Upon completion of the onload of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) at Morehead City, North Carolina, Whidbey Island, USS Wasp (LHD-1) and USS Shreveport (LPD-12) began a transit across the Atlantic Ocean.

During the transit across the Atlantic Ocean, weather again delayed the plans of the ARG. Whidbey Island diverted to Naval Station, Rota, Spain and used the opportunity to onload stores and receive mail. Prior to departing Rota, the ship was visited by Rear Admiral Pecote, Commander Amphibious Group Two. Once stores were unloaded, Whidbey Island left Rota enroute to the English Channel.

## MARCH

On 3 March, Whidbey Island conducted an underway replenishment with USNS John Lenthal in the vicinity of the English Channel while enroute the Norwegian Fjords.

An amphibious assault exercise was conducted in the Norwegian Fjord, Surnadals on 5 March. The exercise consisted of a complete off-load of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) by helicopter, Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC), and Landing Craft Utility (LCU) units. LCU's conducted stern gate marriage operations which decreased the time of off-load.

After a successful amphibious assault exercise, Whidbey Island visited Troudheim, Norway Fjord between 10 - 12 March. Whidbey Island departed Norway and sailed south to Brest, France, but severe weather caused the ship to seek safe haven in Stavanger, Norway on 15 March.

While battling the storms, the port shaft stern tube seal was damaged, but the crew reacted quickly and was able to correct the casualty in minimal time. The Whidbey Island departed Stavanger during a brief break in the weather, on 21 March, and steamed west toward Morehead City, North Carolina.

## APRIL

The USS Whidbey Island began April enroute Morehead City, North Carolina in the company of USS Wasp (LHD-1) and USS Shreveport (LPD-12). On 3 April, Whidbey Island arrived at Morehead City and began the off-load of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) elements and equipment. After completing the off-load the ship embarked members of the local Navy League chapter and Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) for a two day cruise to Little Creek, Naval Amphibious Base (NAB), Virginia.

Whidbey Island arrived in her homeport, Little Creek, NAB on 5 April. On 10 April, the Engineering Training Group (ETG) arrived onboard to conduct training for the Engineering Department. The ETG accompanied the ship on a three day training exercise in the Virginia Capes Operating Area (VACAPES OPAREA). During the short underway time the Engineering Department conducted multiple training drills on Basic Engineering Casualty Control Evolutions (BECCEs) under the watchful eye of the ETG. The ship also conducted a launch of the Ship's Self Radiated Noise Monitoring (SSRNM) test buoy from the well deck. Other drills conducted during the underway period included man overboard drills and General Quarters. While returning to Little Creek, Whidbey Island completed a run on the degaussing range. The ship arrived home at Little Creek on 13 April.

Shortly after returning to Little Creek, Whidbey Island began

an Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV) and a Logistic Management Assessment (LMA) assist on 17 April. On 19 April, the ship began the installation of the SNAP III computer system, enhancing her ability to manage the 3M and personnel management systems.

## MAY

The USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) began May inport Little Creek, NAB, Virginia and continued the Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV) that began in April. The installation of the SNAP III system continued through the end of the month, while inport duty sections regularly conducted fire drills and rescue and assistance drills. On 3 May, Commander, Amphibious Squadron Four, Captain Young, embarked onboard the Whidbey Island.

The ship began Type Commander Amphibious Training (TCAT) on 15 May. Again the ship was joined by Marine Second Lieutenants from the BASCOLEX who were eager to learn the ropes of a fleet "Gator". TCAT was conducted in the Cherry Point, North Carolina and Onslow Bay OPAREAs, in company with the USS Wasp (LHD-1), USS Jack Williams (FFG-24) and USS Ashland (LSD-48). Whidbey Island embarked elements of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), including Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAV). On 18 May, the Whidbey Island provided underway close in replenishment refueling to the USS Jack Williams (FFG-24).

The ships involved in the exercise then transited to Onslow Bay to conduct amphibious assault exercises. Operations during TCAT included: darken ship; deceptive lighting; stern gate marriages with a Landing Craft Utility (LCU) unit; explosive ordnance drills; and launching of the AAVs.

While returning to Little Creek after the off-load of the 26th MEU, the Whidbey Island conducted an underway replenishment with



the USNS John Lenthal (T-AO-189). On 24 May, the USS Whidbey Island returned to Little Creek, NAB and conducted a safety stand-down which included safety training in the following areas: proper donning and doffing of Oxygen Breathing Apparatus (OBA); Emergency Egress Breathing Device (EEBD); and electrical safety.

## JUNE

In preparation for the upcoming Mediterranean deployment, USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) was underway in June to conduct work-ups and training. With Marine elements from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), Whidbey Island conducted various exercises in both the Cherry Point and Onslow Bay OPAREAs.

Training included several launches of Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAVs), and a non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO) exercise. Whidbey Island was an invaluable asset to the Amphibious Ready Group (ARG), providing deck landing qualifications and vertical replenishment training for the embarked helicopter pilots. The amphibious assault exercises included a rehearsal and an actual beach landing. Whidbey Island also had the opportunity to conduct an underway replenishment with USNS John Lenthal (T-AO-189).

Upon completion of the Amphibious Assault exercises and debarkation of the Marines in Morehead City, Whidbey Island embarked over 120 family members for an overnight dependent's cruise on 16 and 17 June.

While inport Little Creek, Naval Amphibious Base, Virginia, the ship continued to prepare for the upcoming deployment. Preparations included resurfacing the deck on the forecastle, along with the port and starboard replenishment at sea (RAS) stations. On 24 and 25 June, Whidbey Island had the honor of being the visit ship for Little Creek, Naval Amphibious Base, and cordially welcomed a Brazilian Commander on 27 June.

## JULY

Following the celebration of the Country's 219th birthday, the crew of the USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) was underway for a training evolution prior to the Mediterranean deployment. Joint Fleet Task Force Exercise 95 (JTFEX-95) began on 6 July and included the following: USS America (CV-66) battle group; Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG); elements of the United States Air Force and the United States Coast Guard.

Whidbey Island began the exercise successfully defending a small boat sneak attack exercise as she exited Little Creek harbor. During the transit of the traffic separation scheme at the entrance of Chesapeake Bay, Whidbey Island embarked two Landing Craft Utility (LCU) units from Assault Craft Unit TWO. Exercises during the JTFEX-95 included a Chemical, Biological and Radiological attack drill and a test of the ship's counter measure wash down system. Whidbey Island also conducted a test of the Chaff launching systems, a firing of the Close In Weapon System (CIWS), and a practice of the .50 Caliber and the 25mm machine guns. Other exercises accomplished during JTFEX-95 included the following: torpedo evasion drills; a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation exercise (NEO); security alert drills; anti-ship cruise missile and anti-air warfare exercises; and stern gate marriages for the onloading and offloading of Marine equipment.

While anchored in the vicinity of Morehead City, North Carolina, Whidbey Island embarked elements of the 26th Marine

Expeditionary Unit (MEU). Equipment embarked included the following: Amphibious Assault Vehicles, Marine five-ton trucks and High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV). The ARG later conducted a rehearsal amphibious assault landing at Camp Pendleton, North Carolina with the actual assault taking place at Onslow Bay, North Carolina. United States Air Force elements participated in the exercise as aggressor aircraft and made numerous simulated attack runs on the entire battle group. United States Coast Guard units provided picket ship services for the ARG during small boat attack exercises. SEAL teams provided training for shipboard personnel during a night time sneak attack and attempted boarding of the units in the ARG. USS Whidbey Island foiled the SEAL teams attempts with her two 36 foot Landing Craft Personnel (LCPL) and sharp lookouts.

During the entire JTFEX-95 the Whidbey Island acted as a ready deck for the training of helicopter pilots. Training for the pilots included day and night deck landing qualifications (DLQ), vertical replenishment (VERTREP), and night vision goggle (NVG) navigation.

On 14 July, Commander, Amphibious Group Two, Rear Admiral Fladd, visited the ship and was welcomed for lunch in the Wardroom. On 18 July, the USS Whidbey Island was alongside the USS Monongahela (AO-178) for an underway replenishment.

Following the conclusion of JTFEX-95, and after the off-load of the elements of the 26th MEU, the Whidbey Island returned to Little Creek, Virginia on 24 July. After a one-day ammunition

onload on 25 July, the ship began the first of two Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) leave periods.

## AUGUST

USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) opened the month of August with half the crew continuing their Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) leave period. Concurrently, the Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV) proceeded as planned. After a one-day turnover on 7 August, the second POM leave period began. SIMA Little Creek, SIMA Norfolk, civilian contractors, NORSHIPCO Shipyard workers and the ship's company all worked diligently through the two leave periods preparing for the upcoming Mediterranean deployment.

Hurricane Felix interrupted the second POM leave period on 12 August, and initiated a recall of all Second Fleet personnel. A sortie of all Second Fleet ships began on 15 August. Upon exiting Little Creek, Whidbey Island steamed in formation with the Second Fleet until Hurricane Felix was no longer a threat. On 20 August, Whidbey Island returned to Little Creek, NAB and continued her preparations for the upcoming deployment.

On 28 August, Whidbey Island departed Little Creek for her fifth Mediterranean deployment with ship's company manning the rails.

Whidbey Island's first stop was Morehead City, North Carolina where the ship embarked elements of the 26TH Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). The onload of over 300 Marines and Marine officers, along with Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAV's), M1A1 tanks, 5 ton trucks, and HUMVEEs was completed on 29 August. During late evening on 29 August, USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) and the ARG began

their transit across the Atlantic Ocean. On 30 August, the Whidbey Island conducted an underway replenishment with the USS Merrimack (AO-179).

On 30 August, at 1830 hours at coordinates 33:56N 070:33W in 2,800 fathoms of water, a burial at sea ceremony took place on the ship's flight deck. Conforming to naval tradition, the ship was stopped, colors displayed at half mast, and the participating officers and crew were paraded while the remains of CEC Archie R. Hagle, USN, (Vet) were committed to sea. The evening was pleasant with a 78 degree temperature and with slight winds and seas. Under these favorable conditions, both the religious and military ceremonies were conducted with dignity and solemnity. The ship's Commanding Officer, Terence E. McKnight, CDR, U. S. Navy was the military commander of the ceremony. A seven person rifle squad with an officer in charge, a flag bearer, a three member flag detail, and a 10 member honor platoon were present for the ceremony.

## SEPTEMBER

The last month of fiscal year 1995 began with the USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) conducting a transit across the Atlantic Ocean as part of the Marine Amphibious Readiness Group (MARG 3-95). After the transatlantic crossing, and avoiding Hurricanes Iris and Luis along the way, USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) and USS Wasp (LHD-1) turned-over with the USS Kearsarge (LHD-3) ARG near the western entrance to the Straits of Gibraltar. Following the turnover and during the early morning hours of 9 September, the Whidbey Island, the Wasp and the Shreveport passed through the Straits of Gibraltar and entered the Mediterranean Sea as part of Task Force Sixty One.

After entering the Mediterranean Sea, the Whidbey Island detached from her flagship, USS Wasp (LHD-1), and continued north enroute Alicante, Spain for her first port visit on 11 September. Alicante, a small city on the eastern coast of Spain featuring a castle (Castilla de Santa Barbara) built in the tenth century, was an enjoyable port visit for the Sailors and embarked Marines.

The crew enjoyed shopping, tours of the country side and the beautiful beaches of Alicante. The Whidbey Island basketball team was invited to play against the Spanish Marines. Also, officers from the Whidbey Island wardroom attended a reception hosted by the Levante Navy League, in Benidorm, Spain. The wardroom returned their hospitality by holding a reception onboard Whidbey Island the next day.

Whidbey Island departed Alicante on the morning of 15



September and proceeded toward the coast of Tunisia. In conjunction with the Tunisian Army, the USS Whidbey Island and the MARG 3-95 participated in Exercise Atlas Hinge. Atlas Hinge included both a rehearsal assault and a beach landing by the elements of the 26th MEU.

On 20 September, the Commander Sixth Fleet, Vice Admiral Donald L. Pilling, visited the Whidbey Island. During his visit, he awarded five Navy Achievement Medals to members of the Supply department. He also addressed the crew on the importance of staying battle ready and stressed each sailor's role as an ambassador of the United States.

At the conclusion of Exercise Atlas Hinge, the Whidbey Island and the Wasp proceeded north to rendezvous with the Shreveport. On 24 September, the Whidbey Island received the call at 0400 hours to prepare to tow the USS Butte (AE-27). Butte had suffered a casualty to her main condenser and was adrift approximately 90 miles north east of the Whidbey Island. Whidbey Island's Deck department prepared and set up all towing, rigging and accessories in under three hours and then executed a textbook towing operation. After the towing hawser was securely attached between the ships, Whidbey Island set sail for Augusta Bay, Sicily. Using a five knot SOA, the Whidbey Island towed Butte to shelter in less than 24 hours. After the Butte was safe in Augusta Bay, the Whidbey Island returned to her original station.

Because of their outstanding towing performance, Whidbey Island's Deck department received praise from the highest ranking

personnel in-theater, to include: CINCUSNAVEUR, COMNAVSIXTHFLT, COMCARGRU SIX, and COMPHIBRON FOUR.

On 27 September, Commander Carrier Group SIX, Rear Admiral Cross, visited the Whidbey Island. During his stay, he toured the well deck, M1A1 tanks, AAVs, LCU, and spoke with many crew members. RADM Cross then presided over a reenlistment ceremony for PNC(SW) [REDACTED] in the CPO Mess. Afterwards, RADM Cross addressed the officers concerning the U. S. Navy's mission in the Adriatic Sea.

The remainder of September was spent with USS Wasp training for Exercise Odysseus, a joint exercise with the Greek Navy. During this time, the Whidbey Island remained at modified condition three while steaming in the Adriatic Sea.

## OCTOBER

October was a busy month for the USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41). In company with the USS America battle group and Marine Amphibious Ready Group (MARG 3-95), the operations tempo only on rare occasions slowed. Whidbey Island completed several amphibious operations with USS Wasp (LHD-1) and USS Shreveport (LPD-12). On October 2nd, Whidbey Island detached from the command element of the ARG in order to participate in Exercise Odysseus 95. Prior to departure, Whidbey Island embarked COMPHIBRON FOUR Chief Staff Officer, CDR Ruck, and elements of the ARG SEAL team from USS Shreveport. Odysseus 95, an exercise conducted with the Hellenic Armed Forces and elements of the British Army, took place in three bays along the southern Hellenic Peninsula.

The first phase of the exercise took place in Kyprissia Bay, on the western coast of the peninsula. Whidbey Island off-loaded a forty man Marine Opposition Force comprised of elements from "E" Company BLT 2/6, the embarked SEALs, and embarked Assault Craft Unit TWO Utility Landing Craft (LCU-1654) for a beach landing. Upon extraction of all forces, Whidbey Island departed Kyprissia Bay for Volos Bay for cross training with the Hellenic Navy.

HS Samos (LST-1174) Tank Landing Ship of the Hellenic Navy rendezvoused with Whidbey Island in Volos Bay, Greece, on the eastern coast of the peninsula. While enroute Volos Bay, the crew was drilled in General Quarters and abandon ship exercises. While in Volos Bay, Whidbey Island off-loaded Marines from "E" CO 2/6 BLT

and the Navy SEALs for operations and cross training with Hellenic Army and a Hellenic SEAL team, to include live firing exercises. Cross training with the HS Samos included sterngate compression marriages and Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAV's) embarkation onboard Samos.

The Commanding Officer of Whidbey Island, CDR T. E. McKnight, and members of the Wardroom and Chief Petty Officer's Mess attended a luncheon onboard the HS Samos. In return, Whidbey Island invited the crew of HS Samos for a steel beach picnic and tour of the ship. While anchored in Volos Bay, a group of British Army officers toured the Whidbey Island as well. Whidbey Island also embarked four Hellenic Air Force and Naval Officers for liaison duties during the TASMO operations.

After completion of the cross training, Whidbey Island and HS Samos transited to Nafplion Bay, Greece for the rehearsal phase of Odysseus 95. While enroute Nafplion Bay, Whidbey Island participated in TASMO operations, involving elements of the Hellenic Air Force. Whidbey Island and HS Samos conducted flag hoist and flashing light drills. Upon arriving in Nafplion Bay, on the southern coast of the Hellenic peninsula, Whidbey Island launched four AAV's for the rehearsal phase of Odysseus 95 and continued TASMO operations with the Hellenic Air Force. After a day in Nafplion Bay, Whidbey Island weighed anchor and departed for Kyprissia Bay, Greece, the site of the assault phase. In Kyprissia Bay, all elements of "E" Co 2/6 BLT Marines less the embarked M1A1 tanks and crews, off-loaded and deployed with the Hellenic Army for

a day of cross training. Upon completion of the back-load, Whidbey Island departed for the Adriatic Sea to rejoin the ARG. Whidbey Island detached from the ARG on 13 October and transited to Souda Bay, Crete, for a port visit. Prior to arriving in Souda Bay, Whidbey Island celebrated the Navy's Birthday, with General Quarters, man overboard drills, CIWS and 50 Cal PAC fires, a birthday cake, and a special evening meal. While inport Souda Bay, the command hosted a ten mile relay race for crewmembers to promote physical fitness. Whidbey Island departed Souda Bay and rendezvoused with the ARG and USNS San Diego (AFS-6) for an Underway Replenishment (UNREP) consisting of over 100 pallets.

After completing the UNREP with San Diego, Whidbey Island detached from the ARG and transited to Haifa, Israel, for LCU-1654 to effect repairs to her port shaft and transmission at the shipyard. The shaft was repaired and LCU-1654 was fully operational in less than five hours. After recovering the LCU, Whidbey Island departed the Haifa area and transited to Sikim, Israel, to off-load all "E" CO 2/6 BLT Marines, to participate in Exercise Noble Shirley. Prior to the off-load of the Marines, Whidbey Island rendezvoused with USS Wasp and USS Shreveport and conducted Tactical Maneuvering Drills. Due to the beach gradient at Sikim beach, LCU's were not utilized for the off-load for the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). The entire operation was conducted using Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC).

After the off-load, the ships of the ARG departed the Sikim area and headed for Haifa for a one day port visit. While in-port

Haifa, Whidbey Island embarked an Engineering Training Group (ETG). The ETG observed Basic Engineering Casualty Control Exercises (BECCE's) and inspected all engineering administrative programs.

On 26 October, Whidbey Island conducted an UNREP with USS Monongahela (TAO-178) for over 100,000 gallons of F76. Two days later Whidbey Island received a VERTREP from USS Butte (AE-27), to replenish ammunition. Whidbey Island returned to Haifa, Israel, on 30 October for an Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV) and remained in-port Haifa for the remainder of the month.

## NOVEMBER

USS Whidbey Island (LSD-12) started the month of November in company with the USS Wasp (LHD-1) and USS Shreveport (LPD-12) in the ancient and mountainous city of Haifa, Israel. The mid deployment Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV) continued in the Israeli shipyard, while both Sailors and Marines enjoyed magnificent tours of the Holy Land. Crewmembers also participated in community relation projects with the help of LT [REDACTED], the ship's dentist, and LCDR [REDACTED], 26 MEU Chaplain, to include renovation of a boys juvenile home, painting and repair of a handicapped childrens' playground and an archeological dig of an early Christian church.

The back load of the Marines returning from Exercise Noble Shirley began on 2 November 1995 with them spending nearly a week washing the desert sand off all the vehicles and equipment. M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks embarked Whidbey Island using Assault Craft Unit 2, LCU-1654. Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAV's), were transported over land via Israeli trucks to Whidbey Island. Prior to leaving port Whidbey Islands' Operation Officer, LT [REDACTED], and Ships Bos'n, CWO3 [REDACTED], attended a pre-sail conference onboard USS Wasp (LHD-1) in preparation for Bright Star 95, the next amphibious exercise.

While departing the port of Haifa, Whidbey Island ballasted down in heavy seas allowing the flawless execution of a safe recovery of LCU 1654 in less than ideal conditions, by the Deck

Department. After recovering the LCU, Whidbey Island along with the remaining ships in the ARG started the short transit to Al-Ahmed, Egypt, the operating area of Exercise Bright Star. Exercise Bright Star, an exercise conducted with both regional and NATO allies, included the navies of Egypt, the United Kingdom, and France. Other U.S. forces involved in the exercise included the USS America (CV-66) and her Battle Group. Cross-training with the Egyptian army consisted of embarking Egyptian Army personnel, and the loading and launching of six Egyptian tanks over the horizon via LCAC's. Cross training with the French Navy involved well deck embarkation and debarkation of a Landing Craft Tanks (LCT) and French LCU. The LCT was nearly twice the size of a U. S. Navy LCU and required expert well operations to handle such a large craft.

After completing the backload of Marine equipment used in Bright Star 95, Whidbey Island and Shreveport transited to Augusta Bay, Italy, on the island of Sicily. The unplanned port visit was directed in order to load cold weather gear for the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked onboard all ships of the Marine Amphibious Readiness Group. Enroute Augusta Bay, Whidbey Island suffered a casualty to her ship's control console (SCC), causing the postponement of an underway replenishment with the USNS John Lenthal.

Whidbey Island and Shreveport set sail from Augusta Bay after spending a full day unloading Marine cold weather equipment and transited to Pagasstikos Bay, Greece in support of Exercise Alexander the Great 95. Alexander the Great 95 was conducted in



two different bays of the southern Greek Islands, included an entire Hellenic Navy Amphibious Task Force of over 10 ships. The HS Samos (LST-174), the same ship Whidbey Island operated with during Odysseus 95, again worked alongside United States Navy forces. While enroute Pagasstikos Bay, Whidbey Island celebrated Thanksgiving early, to share the day with Marine forces who would be ashore conducting cross training on the actual day of the holiday. During the final phase of the exercise Whidbey Island conducted a Chief of Naval Operations directed Good Order and Discipline Standdown.

While anchored in Pagasstikos Bay, Whidbey Island completed stores replenishment with the USNS Saturn, receiving cargo and equipment. Furthering the relationship built during Odysseus 95, the Captain of the HS Samos (LST-174), hosted a tour for the crew of the newly constructed Samos. Whidbey Island, in company with the Hellenic Amphibious Task Force and the USS Shreveport (LPD-12), sailed forty nautical miles before returning to conduct a pre-dawn rehearsal assault.

The assault staged in Kalamitsa Bay, on Skyros island, took place using landing craft from the entire task force. Assault vehicles included U.S. Navy AAV's, LCU's, Hellenic LST's, LCVP's, and LSM's. In all more than thirty landing craft beached on the small inlet. The Marines, upon landing on the beach, found themselves under simulated fire from Hellenic opposition forces. While waves of assault craft touched down on beach center, Hellenic Air Force planes conducted dog fights over the battle area.

After finishing Alexander the Great 95, Whidbey Island received tasking to proceed with USS Shreveport to rendezvous with the USS Wasp in the Adriatic sea. The initialing of the peace agreement between the warring factions in the former Yugoslavia resulted in this unexpected schedule change. The entire MARG stood ready to launch Marines ashore in support of the Implementation Force.

Shortly after arriving in the area, Whidbey Island executed a mid deployment Safety Standdown. The training reiterated the importance of safety to the crew.

## DECEMBER

USS Whidbey Island (LSD-41) began December transiting enroute the Adriatic Sea Oparea. On 2 December Whidbey Island conducted an underway replenishment with USNS John Lenthal for fuel. Two days later, Whidbey Island participated in a vertical replenishment with the USNS Saturn, for the delivery of fresh fruits, vegetables and other supplies.

In order to effect repairs to a shaft seal, Whidbey Island was authorized a port visit in Bari, Italy. Staying in Bari, Italy for five days Whidbey Island completed repairs to the shaft seal. Using the break in underway time wisely Whidbey Island conducted it's semi-annual physical readiness test.

Departing Bari, Italy on 10 December, Whidbey Island returned to the Adriatic Sea Oparea. Within the next five days Whidbey Island conducted underway replenishments with the USNS John Lenthal, USNS Leroy Grumman and USNS Saturn.

Whidbey Island had the honor of hosting various dignitaries and VIPs throughout the month. The first VIP to visit Whidbey Island was the Commanding General Marine Forces Atlantic, Lieutenant General Wilhelm. General Wilhelm came to speak to the embarked Marines from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit "E" Company 2/6 BLT. Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Boorda, Commander Sixth Fleet, Vice Admiral Pilling and the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, Electronics Technician Master Chief Hagen, visited the ship on 18 December. Shortly following the

CNO's visit, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Krulak along with the Sergeant Major Lee of the Marine Corps, arrived on 23 December.

On Christmas Eve Commander Carrier Group Six, Rear Admiral Cross addressed the crew. All the visiting VIPs spoke of the importance of the Navy and Marine Corps team and its presence in the Adriatic Sea as part of the Peace Implementation Force and Operation Joint Endeavor.

Christmas was celebrated at sea, with a holiday meal, an all faith Christmas service, a Christmas play and mail. The day after Christmas the crew and embarked Sailors and Marines were treated to a USO Comedy tour. A show enjoyed by the entire crew and embarked Sailors and Marines.

Commander Implementation Forces (COMIFOR), Admiral Smith visited Whidbey Island on 27 December. Repeating the message of the importance of a strong Navy and Marine Corps presence in the Adriatic Sea, Admiral Smith brought civilian media to include reporters from NBC Television News, Associated Press, Bosnian Television and Serbian Press, to tour the ship.

After completing an underway replenishment with the USNS John Lenthal on 29 December, Whidbey Island in company with USS Shreveport (LPD-12) conducted a port visit in Venice, Italy over the New Year's Holiday.