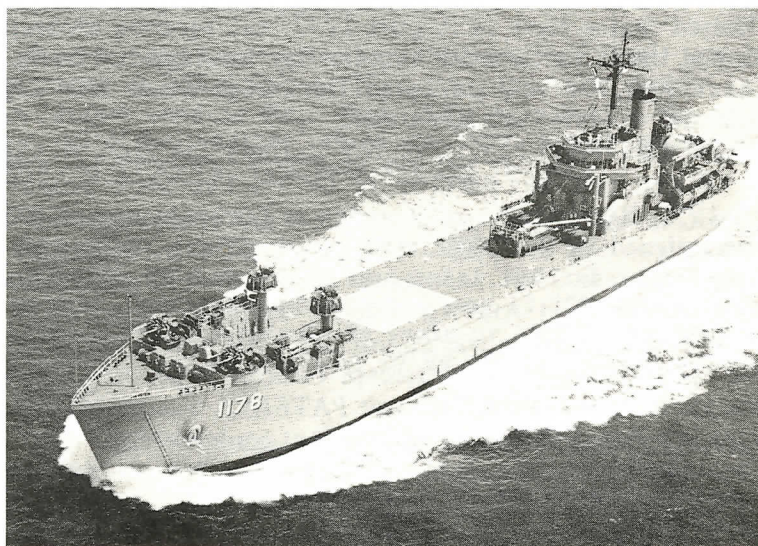


*Welcome
Aboard...*



**USS WOOD COUNTY
LST - 1178**

**Lieutenant Commander
Lawrence M. PATELLA
United States Navy**



Lieutenant Commander Lawrence M. PATELLA, USN, was born on August 10, 1929 in Danbury, Connecticut, the twelfth child in a family of six sisters and eight brothers.

After graduating from Danbury High School, he enlisted in the United States Navy in August 1947, and received his recruit training at the U.S. Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Illinois. In the next year, he was graduated from both Sonar and Radar schools, and was rated as a Radarman.

Radarman PATELLA advanced through the rates to Chief Petty Officer, and was selected for Officer Candidate School in March 1958. Receiving his commission as Ensign in August 1958, he was assigned to the USS CHARLES P. CECIL (DDR 835) as gunnery officer. In 1961, Lieutenant (junior grade) PATELLA was ordered to the Fleet Anti-Air Warfare Training Center at Dam Neck, Virginia, where he was an instructor in Combat Information Center Operations and Air Intercept Control Supervisor courses. During the Cuban crisis, Lieutenant PATELLA was transferred to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as an air intercept controller.

In July 1963, Lieutenant PATELLA was transferred to the USS PRINCETON (LPH 5) as first lieutenant. While aboard the PRINCETON, he first saw action in Vietnam, and participated in the first amphibious landing of the conflict at DaNang in March 1965.

Leaving PRINCETON in November 1965, Lieutenant PATELLA was assigned as commanding officer of the USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST 846), the first Navy ship specifically designed to support river patrol boats and attack helicopter operations in South Vietnam's Mekong Delta.

Prior to reporting to USS WOOD COUNTY (LST 1178), Lieutenant Commander PATELLA served as assistant Force operations officer on the staff of Commander Amphibious Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE

Amphibious warfare isn't new.

The earliest amphibious task force was probably a fleet of dugout canoes and rafts that transported a band of prehistoric "marines" along a coast to attack an enemy village.

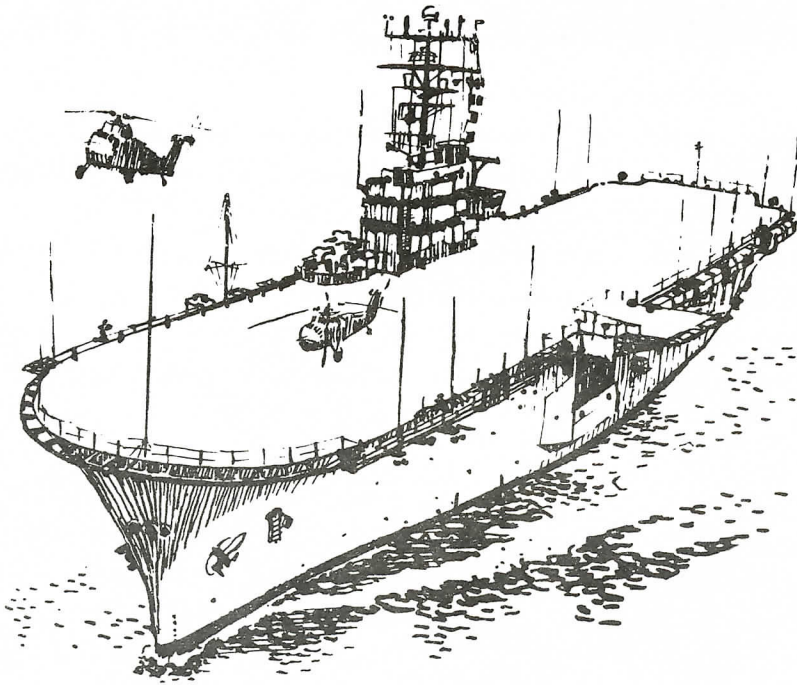
A modern amphibious operation, with landings on hostile shores, is launched from the sea by naval and landing forces in ships and landing craft. Its aims may be to prosecute further combat operations, obtain sites for bases, or deny areas or facilities to the enemy.



This highly specialized type of warfare came into its own during World War II. The war's global nature was a major factor. To be successful in modern war, forces must fight offensively; war must be carried to and fought on enemy soil. Because two-thirds of the earth is covered by water, amphibious operations are vital.

Early experiments helped give America its World War II amphibious capabilities. The Navy and the Marine Corps held basic amphibious exercises, including experiments with specially designed landing craft and vehicles, as early as 1923. Ten years later, when the Fleet Marine Force was formed to specialize in amphibious operations, the Navy began a major effort toward the design and construction of amphibious ships and craft.

During the 25-year lull between World Wars I and II, the United States developed the doctrine, organization, tactics, and techniques necessary for success in amphibious warfare. The Navy and Marine Corps, in addition to actually conducting landing operations, established a workable doctrine for both troop and naval components of an amphibious attack force.



The planning and training begun by the Navy and Marine Corps in the early thirties paid off in World War II. In fact, every major drive made by U.S. Forces in the war was started with an amphibious assault, beginning with Guadalcanal in 1942 and ending with Okinawa in 1945.

By the end of the war, America had the most powerful amphibious warfare capability in the world. She has never lost this lead.

Modern amphibious operations are quite different from their historical predecessors. First of all, naval forces in a modern amphibious operation have an important combat role as well as a transportation role. Gunfire from Navy ships and carrier aircraft substantially reduce enemy defenses before the first troops ever land.

Secondly, troops that engage in modern amphibious operations are highly trained for just that role.

Marines of the Fleet Marine Force are not merely soldiers transported to their battleground by ship. They are as much at home aboard Navy ships as ashore.

They know how to fight using gun and missile power from Navy ships and air power from carrier aircraft to help them take their objectives.

Groups such as the "Frogmen" of the Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams and the "Seabees" of the Amphibious Construction Battalions are highly trained in skills unique to amphibious warfare.

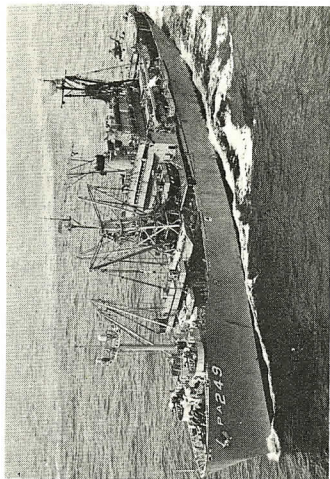
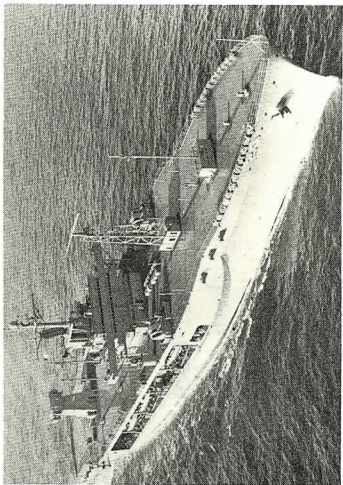
Lastly, ships, landing craft and weapons have been developed especially for amphibious operations. Landing ships that purposely run aground, unload troops and equipment, then free themselves and return to the sea; helicopter carriers designed to carry Marines to the beach, then send them behind enemy lines by helicopters; tracked landing vehicles that move through water, then over the beach and deep inland before discharging troops — all are part of the modern amphibious arsenal.

Faster, larger and more versatile ships will continue to replace older ships as the Navy continues to modernize. Besides a greater capability for amphibious warfare, the new ships also afford better living and working conditions for their crews and embarked Marines. New landing craft, helicopters and other equipment also will reach the Fleet and enable amphibious forces to better penetrate hostile areas, land combat-ready troops, and provide the support necessary for victory.

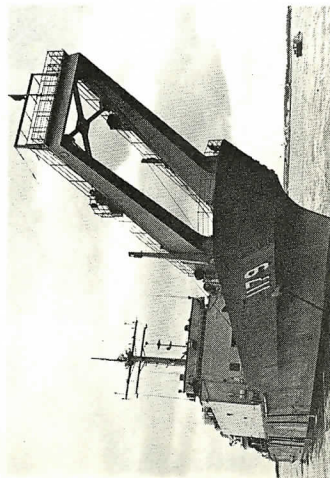


The 7 Types Of Ships Of The Atlantic Fleet Amphibious Force

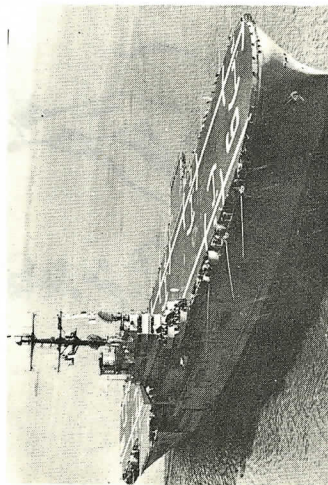
USS MOUNT WHITNEY
(LCC-20)
Amphibious Command
Ship



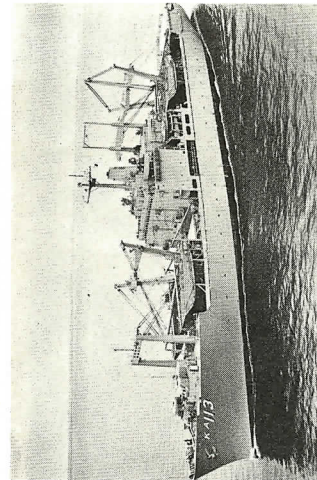
USS FRANCIS MARION
(LPA-249)
Amphibious Transport



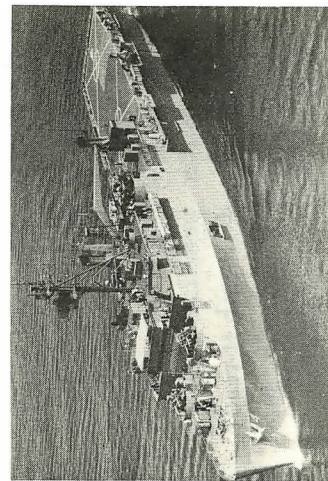
USS NEWPORT
(LST-1179)
Tank Landing Ship



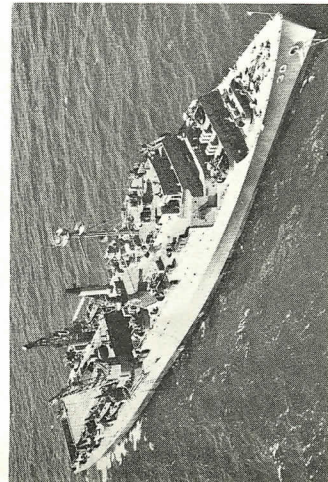
USS GUAM
(LPH-9)
Amphibious Assault
Ship



USS CHARLESTON
(LKA-113)
Amphibious Cargo
Ship



USS AUSTIN
(LPD-4)
Amphibious Transport
Dock



USS FORT SNELLING
(LSD-30)
Dock Landing Ship





THE NAVY-MARINE CORPS TEAM

An amphibious assault is one of the most complex operations in modern warfare. Success requires expert teamwork between everyone participating. The ideal team for this kind of action is the Navy's Amphibious Force, and the Marine Corps' Fleet Marine Force.



Commanded by Vice Admiral C. Edwin Bell, USN, the Amphibious Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet has its headquarters at the U.S. Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, at Norfolk, Va. His flagship is the USS Mount Whitney (LCC-20). Over 12,000 men in about 35 ships and nearly 30 other commands comprise the Force. One squadron of various types of ships regularly deploys to the Caribbean — another serves on station in the Mediterranean.

The Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, commanded by Lieutenant General Earl E. Anderson, USMC, also has its headquarters at Norfolk. Its principal elements are the 2nd Marine Division and Force Troops, both stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C.; and the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, located at Cherry Point, N.C. Embarked Marine landing forces, consisting of both ground and helicopter units, are customarily deployed.



OUR SHIP, HER HISTORY, HER MISSION

Built in 1959 by the American Shipbuilding Company at Lorraine, Ohio, the WOOD COUNTY is specifically designed to transport combat loaded vehicles, men, and associated supplies into areas designated to receive amphibious assaults. Upon arrival in these areas, her flat bottom, bow doors, and bow ramp give her the capability of lodging herself on the beach and discharging her cargo directly into enemy held areas. Should low tides or irregular bottom conditions prevent this, the WOOD COUNTY can launch sections of pontoon causeway and discharge her load while standing close offshore.

With a length of 442 feet, a beam of 62 feet, and a full load displacement of 7800 tons the WOOD COUNTY is the largest Landing Ship, Tank (LST) ever built. The six powerful diesel engines, which can drive her at speeds in excess of 17 knots, also make her the fastest.

The WOOD COUNTY has a fuel capacity of 480,000 gallons, a water capacity of 89,000 gallons, can cruise 18,000 miles without refueling, and using her tank deck and main deck, is capable of carrying over 18,300 square feet of cargo. This represents 24 tanks or 30 2½ ton trucks; about the carrying capacity of 80 of our largest cargo aircraft.

WOOD COUNTY is manned by 162 enlisted personnel and 10 officers, and her commodious troop compartments can provide berths for 600 combat troops and 30 officers for a total of 832 men.

The ship regularly deploys to various areas of the world to perform her mission. In the relatively few years that have elapsed since her commissioning, WOOD COUNTY has had several deployments with the SIXTH FLEET in the Mediterranean and to the Caribbean area. She is truly 'a large ship with a large mission'.

