

USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13)  
FLEET POST OFFICE  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 09501

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From: Commanding Officer, USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09B9), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, D.C. 20390

Subj: Command History, 1970, USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13); OPNAV 5750-1

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12A

Encl: (1) USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13) Command History, 1970  
(2) Documentary Annex to USS NASHVILLE Command History, 1970

1. Enclosures (1) and (2) are forwarded in accordance with reference (a).

  
D. F. MILLIGAN

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USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13)  
Command History, 1970

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1. Chronology of Highlights.

- a. 14 February: The USS NASHVILLE was commissioned at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington. The Honorable C. Beverly Briley, Mayor of Nashville, Tennessee, delivered the commissioning address.
- b. 15 February through 1 April: Fitting out availability at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.
- c. 2-6 April: Ready for sea period including loading ammunition.
- d. 7 April: USS NASHVILLE departed NAD, Bangor, Washington for her home port, Norfolk, Virginia. Liberty ports visited enroute were San Francisco, 10 April; San Diego, 14-16 April; Acapulco, 23-25 April; and Balboa (Panama Canal), 2-3 May.
- e. 29 April: USS NASHVILLE crossed the Equator at 86-43.0 W Longitude followed by the traditional Shell Back Ceremony.
- f. 2 May: Arrived at Naval Station, Rodman, C.Z.
- g. 3 May: The ship transited the Panama Canal.
- h. 9 May: The ship arrived at her home port, Norfolk, Virginia.
- i. 14 May: Departed Norfolk for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, with a stop at Morehead City, N.C. on 15 May.
- j. 19 May: The ship arrived at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and off-loaded personnel and equipment of the 2nd Tank Battalion, USMC.
- k. 20 May: Underway from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba enroute to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
- l. 24-27 May: Final Contract Trials were conducted at Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
- m. 28 May - 7 June: Inport Roosevelt Roads while repairing steering engines.
- n. 10 June - 10 July: Shakedown Training was conducted at Guantanamo Bay.
- o. 14 July: USS NASHVILLE returned to Norfolk, Virginia.

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Enclosure (1)

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p. 27 July - 7 August: Amphibious Shakedown Training was conducted off the coast of North Carolina and Virginia.

q. 10 August: The NASHVILLE became the flagship for Commander, Amphibious Squadron SIX (Captain E. M. MASCIA, USN).

r. 17-28 August: The ship participated in Type Training and Midshipmen Training Cruise, including a visit to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and ending with an amphibious landing exercise (RESMEULEX 1-70).

s. 17 September - 31 October: Post Shakedown Availability at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard.

t. 16-20 November: The ship participated in Amphibious Type Training off the coast of Virginia.

## 2. Basic Narrative.

### a. Command Organization:

(1) Commanding Officer: Captain Frank R. FAHLAND, USN. Dates of Command: 14 February 1970 - 31 December 1970.

(2) Home port: U. S. Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.

(3) Mission of the Ship: The LPD is the newest and most versatile class of amphibious assault ships. In an amphibious assault, it offers the tactical flexibility of either:

(a) vertical envelopment -- rapid attack by helicopters from the flight deck to landing zones on the enemy's flanks or rear; or

(b) beach landings by assault boat waves launched from the floodable boat well; or

(c) a combination of the two.

The LPD can transport about 860 marines along with their combat vehicles and equipment.

(4) Composition of Command: As of 31 December 1970, there were 31 officers and 436 enlisted men attached to USS NASHVILLE.

### b. Operations:

(1) The NASHVILLE commenced her maiden voyage on 6 April, sailing from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, Washington, to her home port of Norfolk, Virginia. After loading 4,800 rounds of 3"/50 ammunition at

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NAD, Bangor, Washington, the ship set a course for her first liberty port, San Francisco, arriving at Alameda Naval Air Station on 10 April. The following day, the ship was underway for San Diego, arriving on 14 April with a brief stop on 13 April at Long Beach to load cargo. While in San Diego, 25 Marines from the 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade were embarked. On 17 April, the ship departed for a visit to Acapulco, Mexico, on 23-25 April. The next stop was Rodman Naval Station at Balboa Canal Zone, with the course altered somewhat in order to cross the Equator on 29 April. After an overnight stop at Balboa on 2-3 May, the ship transited the Panama Canal, which took about eight hours. On 8 May, the ship anchored at Charleston, South Carolina, just long enough to unload some cargo. Finally, on 9 May, the USS NASHVILLE arrived at the U. S. Naval Station in Norfolk, Virginia.

(2) On 14 May, the NASHVILLE departed for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, stopping on 15 May at Morehead City, North Carolina, to debark the personnel from the 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade and to embark 42 more Marines attached to the 2nd Tank Battalion. This unit was debarked on the ship's arrival at Guantanamo Bay on 19 May. The following day, the ship proceeded to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, to conduct Final Contract Trials on 24-27 May. During the full power astern tests, it was revealed that the steering engine was not operating to designed specifications. Repairs were undertaken, delaying departure from Roosevelt Roads until 8 June. The full Final Contract Trials report by the Sub-Board of Inspection and Survey is included in the "Documentary Annex" section of this history. On 9 June the NASHVILLE returned to Guantanamo Bay and conducted shakedown training until 10 July. The final report by the Fleet Training Group is included in the Documentary Annex. Upon completion of training, the ship sailed for Norfolk, stopping briefly at Andros Island in order to load a pontoon, and arrived at her home port on 14 July.

(3) On 27 July, the NASHVILLE commenced two weeks of Amphibious Shakedown Training, the first week operating in the Onslow Beach area, North Carolina, and the second week in the Little Creek Beach area, Virginia. The report by the Commander Amphibious Training Command, Atlantic Fleet, is included in the Documentary Annex.

(4) On 17 August, the NASHVILLE departed her home port for a visit to Halifax, Nova Scotia, utilizing this cruise to conduct Amphibious Type Training and to train 32 embarked Midshipmen. This marked the first time the ship had operated in formation. After visiting Halifax on 21-24 August, the ship returned to the fleet operating areas and participated in an amphibious landing exercise, RESMEULEX 1-70, off the coast of Virginia Beach, on 27-28 August. For this exercise, about 450 Marines (Reserves on active duty for training) were embarked on board the NASHVILLE. Other ships participating were the USS DONNER (LSD-20) and the USS SUFFOLK COUNTY (LST-1173). Officer in Tactical Command was COMPHIBRON SIX, embarked aboard the NASHVILLE. Further details concerning the midshipmen training can be found in the Documentary Annex.

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(5) On 17 September, the ship moved to the Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, commencing a period of Post-Shakedown Availability, lasting until the end of October. Following deperming on 3-4 November and Post Repair Trials 4-5 November, the ship returned to the Naval Station, Norfolk, on 5 November.

(6) USS NASHVILLE assisted the MT. WHITNEY (LCC-20) in her Builder's Trials in the fleet operating areas off the coast of Virginia on 11-12 November.

(7) The NASHVILLE participated in Amphibious Type Training during the period 16-20 November at anchorage and in the operating areas off the Virginia coast. Other ships participating included the USS SPIEGEL GROVE (LSD-32), USS SAN MARCOS (LSD-25), USS GRAHAM COUNTY (LST-1176), and the USS WOOD COUNTY (LST-1178). The major exercises conducted were a helicopter-controlled over-the-horizon boat landing, an amphibious assault landing exercise, and a surface gunnery exercise (SINKEX), in which the target hull was the former USS J.W. WEEKS. Details concerning these exercises may be found in COMPHIBRON SIX OORDER 2505-70, included in the Documentary Annex.

(8) On 30 November and 1 December, the NASHVILLE assisted the MT. WHITNEY (LCC-20) in her Acceptance Trials, conducted in local operating areas.

c. Special Topics.

(1) Weapons statistics: Ammunition expenditure during the year added up to 835 rounds, 3" 50 caliber, all in training exercises. During the SINKEX of 19 November, 248 rounds were fired into the target hull.

(2) Performance of engineering plant: No major discrepancies were in existence as of the end of the year. The most significant casualty concerned the steering engine during the Final Contract Trial, as mentioned previously. Two new steering pumps were flown to the ship from Seattle, Washington, in order to remedy the problem.

(3) Major conversions and modifications: Modifications include the installation of new electronic equipment, a re-configuration of Combat Information Center, and the raising of the TACAN stub mast an additional twelve feet. Shipyard repair work included the operating mechanism of the stern gate, realignment of the main engines with the reduction gears, and repair to the starboard catwalk, damaged during the ship's transit of the Panama Canal.

(4) Developments in tactics and doctrine: The NASHVILLE contributed to the assessment and development of two experimental tactics. The first was an underway launch of LVT's, occurring on 28 July during the ship's Amphibious Shakedown Training. The second was an over-the-horizon amphibious landing, using a helicopter as primary control for the boats. This was conducted on 16 November. Details of this latter tactic can be found in

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Annex H of COMPHIBRON SIX OORDER 2505-70, included in the Documentary Annex. Copies of reports from the ship concerning both of these tactics are also included in the Annex.

(5) Communications statistics: The volume of traffic added up to a total of 12, 357 messages during the year.

(6) Supply statistics: Prior to commissioning, the stores section of the ship's Supply Department processed about 14,000 line items of storeroom stock, 4,500 line items of operating space type, and 3,000 line items of general use consumables. The total value of this material was about \$1,200,000. Since commissioning, 5,000 requisitions were processed, adding up to a value of \$117,500. The general mess served over 300,000 meals, at a value of about \$170,000. The ship's store generated about \$9,500 in profits for the Welfare and Recreation Fund. Payrolls and travel claims amounted to \$1,179, 534.19 during the year.

(7) Personnel data: The ship's manning level as of the end of the year is broken down by rates and ratings in a chart included in the Documentary Annex. Eleven men reenlisted on board during the year. Aside from good conduct medals, two men were presented with awards for duties performed at a previous command.

(8) Medical and Dental activities: During the year, the Medical Department treated 4,047 patients, filled 3,186 prescriptions, administered 1,913 immunizations, and performed 1,355 other services such as X-rays and physical examinations. The annual medical inspection, conducted in December by the COMPHIBLANT Medical Officer, was passed with an overall score of 93, classified "EXCELLENT." Not reflected in the ship's roster of officers in the Documentary Annex is that LT R.E. BAKER, JR., served as Medical Officer until relieved by LT MANWARING in July. The ship's Dental Department also received a grade of "EXCELLENT" from the Force Dental Officer when inspected in December.

(9) Chaplain's Activities: The first church service following the ship's commissioning was held on 15 February. On 7 July, the ship's first Roman Catholic Mass was held. The Chaplain's activities, in addition to church services and counseling, included the following: Library Officer, Welfare and Recreation Council member, Navy Relief Society representative, Combined Federal Campaign coordinator, and Navy Sponsor Program organizer.

3. Documentary Annex. The following items are included in enclosure (2):

- a. USS NASHVILLE Commissioning Ceremony program.
- b. USS NASHVILLE: Information handout.
- c. Commanding Officer's biography.
- d. Executive Officer's biography.

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- e. Roster of ship's Officers.
- f. Captain's family newsletters of 12 July 1970, 16 September 1970, and 5 January 1971.
- g. Copy of Amphibious News of 8 May 1970.
- h. Final Contract Trials report.
- i. Shakedown Training report.
- j. Amphibious Shakedown Training report.
- k. Report of Midshipmen Summer Training.
- l. COMPHIBRON SIX OPORDER 2505-70 for Type Training 16-20 November.
- m. NASHVILLE Supplement to COMPHIBRON SIX OPORDER 2505-70.
- n. NASHVILLE report on Over-the-Horizon Landing Tactic.
- o. NASHVILLE report on Underway LVT Launch Tactic.
- p. Ship's manning level, December 1970.

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