



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS HONOLULU (SSN-718)  
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From: Commanding Officer, USS HONOLULU (SSN 718)  
To: Director of Naval History (Op-09BH), Washington Navy  
Yard, Wash, D.C. 20374

Subj: USS HONOLULU COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

Encl: (1) Basic Historical Narrative

1. In response to reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.

  
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## BASIC HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The USS HONOLULU (SSN 718) began with the keel laying of the UNNAMED HULL 718 at Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company on 10 November 1981. The ship's sponsor was Joan B. Clark. Two years later on 24 May 1983 Captain Robert M. Mitchell reported aboard as the Ship's Prospective Commanding Officer. It was not until August 1983 that the ship was named HONOLULU. She was launched on 24 September 1983.

HONOLULU'S first watches were set on 25 January 1984 to support the transfer of operational control of engineering systems. During this year an increasing portion of the ship was turned over to the crew as each system was tested and verified operational.

The pace of construction continued to quicken during 1985. On 29 January 1985 the ship was placed "in service". On 3 February 1985 the reactor went critical for the first time and by 26 March 1985 all propulsion plant systems were under control of ship's force.

Starting on 10 April HONOLULU conducted fast cruise, Alpha and Bravo Sea Trials. Admiral Kinnaird R. McKee, Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program was onboard to observe Alpha Trials. No major discrepancies were noted and the ship returned to port on 23 April 1985. Charlie Sea Trials were completed on 23 May 1985. Significant problems were noted during Charlie Trials with the Torpedo Handling System that were not resolved until August 1985. The ship was delivered to the Navy on 14 June 1985.

USS HONOLULU (SSN 718) was commissioned on 6 July 1985 at Destroyer and Submarine Piers #23, Norfolk Naval Base, Virginia. The Honorable Judge William C. Clark, former Secretary of the Interior was the principal speaker.

On 19 July 1985, Commander Thomas J. Flanagan relieved Captain Robert M. Mitchell as Commanding Officer, USS HONOLULU. Immediately after the change of command the ship returned to Newport News Shipbuilding for extended repairs on the Torpedo Handling System.

HONOLULU got underway on 26 August 1985 for her first extended at-sea period. The ship transited to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico for Weapons System Accuracy Trials (WSAT). After a week at Roosevelt Roads, HONOLULU made a short trip to St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands to complete WSAT. Next the ship transited to the Tongue of the Ocean in the Andros Islands for acoustic trials and Phase III SONAR certification, returning to Norfolk on 28 September 1985.

In early October, HONOLULU began a busy in port upkeep period that included a Harpoon Weapons Certification and an Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination (ORSE) work up. The ORSE was conducted on 22-23 October with an overall grade of Average assigned. Tomahawk Missile Certification followed in early November with an overall grade of excellent assigned.

HONOLULU got underway on 11 November for MK-48 Torpedo Certification. In transit, HONOLULU conducted emergency recovery trials to test the ship's specially configured split stern planes design. After a brief port stop for weapons loading in Port Canaveral, Florida, torpedo firings on the Weapons Range at the Tongue of the Ocean were conducted. An overall grade of Excellent was assigned for this certification with the ship going "four for five".

After a well deserved Christmas holiday stand down the ship participated in an Atlantic Fleet Submarine Exercise (LANTSUBASWEX 3-86) and a major fleet exercise (FLEETEX 1-86) during the first two months of 1986. On 10 March 1986, HONOLULU entered Post Shakedown Availability (PSA) at Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company. After five months in PSA, HONOLULU completed PSA one day ahead of schedule and began preparations for an interfleet transfer. HONOLULU departed Norfolk on 25 August 1986 for Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, but before departing the Atlantic the ship took one more liberty call in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. After a transit through the Panama Canal on 6 September 1986, HONOLULU headed south to the Equator for a Shellback Ceremony. One hundred and eleven Pollywogs were "initiated" into the Order of the Deep by King Neptune. After a grand celebration and a lot of cleaning the ship proceeded to San Diego for 3 days of well deserved liberty.

Departing San Diego the ship proceeded to Pearl Harbor and the welcome that awaited her. Arriving off Diamond Head on the morning of 21 September 1986, the HONOLULU toured the Waikiki waterfront less than one mile from the shore escorted by many small pleasure crafts. Upon entering Pearl Harbor the ship paused for a salute at the Arizona War Memorial, before receiving a warm "Welcome Home" ceremony at the Hotel Pier that included Hula Dancers, an escort of outrigger canoes, and a speech by the City of Honolulu Mayor, Frank Fasi.

During the next three months HONOLULU completed a Nuclear Weapons Acceptance Inspection (Nwai), achieving seven grades of Outstanding and four grades of Excellent of the twelve graded areas, a Supply Management Inspection (SMI) achieving a grade of Excellent overall, the second highest grade of any SUBPAC SSN for that year, and the ship's second ORSE, scoring an Above Average overall. Beginning in 1987, the ship participated in a major fleet exercise, Prospective Commanding Officers Operations and conducted a highly successful Tactical Readiness Evaluation (TRE) with an Above Average overall grade. HONOLULU then entered a Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) upkeep in mid March in preparation for the ship's first major deployment scheduled for the summer of 1987.

On 12 May 1987, HONOLULU got underway on its first Western Pacific Deployment (WESTPAC). After 10 days at sea the ship made its first liberty call in Moen, Truk Island, being the first major warship since World War II to visit the island and the first nuclear ship ever. After experiencing some problems with retrieving its anchor, HONOLULU finally got underway (leaving its anchor behind)

only to momentarily ground while attempting to transit through a narrow passage out of Truk. Suffering minor damage to the rudder in the grounding, the ship transited to Guam for repairs.

After two weeks in Guam, the ship got under way again on 15 June 1987 for special operations that would significantly test the endurance of the ship. On 19 August 1987 HONOLULU entered port at Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, for 5 days of hard earned liberty, after almost two and a half months at sea. Leaving Subic Bay, the ship proceeded to Yokosuka, Japan for a much needed upkeep, departing there on 8 September for Hong Kong.

Departing Hong Kong on 16 September, after 5 days of exciting liberty, the ship remained at sea until returning to Yokosuka, Japan on 13 October 1987 for an extensive refit. On 21 October, HONOLULU departed Yokosuka enroute to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Prior to arriving in Pearl Harbor, HONOLULU completed its third ORSE, receiving a grade of Above Average, as well as earning the Battle E for engineering readiness for 1987. HONOLULU arrived in Pearl Harbor on 30 October 1987, after being gone nearly six months, to a big welcome home and a well deserved stand down. During stand down in November, HONOLULU was nominated for the Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Edward F. Ney award for excellence in Food Service.

#### STATISTICAL DATA

	1987 <u>Totals*</u>	After <u>Commissioning</u>
Days inport :	157	679
Days at Sea :	180	355
Miles Steamed:	37,129 NM	80,023 NM

\* As of 4 Dec 87