



USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13)

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From: Commanding Officer, USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13)  
To: Chief of Naval Operations, Director of Naval  
History (OP-09BH), Department of the Navy,  
Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. 20374

Subj: USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13) Command History 1978

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B of 20 MAY 1971

Encl: (1) Command History 1978

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is  
forwarded for calendar year 1978

  
D. D. TIMM

## USS NASHVILLE COMMAND HISTORY 1978

### 1. COMMAND ORGANIZATION

a. USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13) remained in Amphibious Squadron Two, commanded by Captain Alden B. Anderson, USN throughout 1978.

b. The Commanding Officer of USS NASHVILLE from 1 January until 2 September 1978 was Captain Herbert B. Dowse Jr., USN. Captain Dowse was relieved by Captain Dwight D. Timm, USN on 2 September. Captain Timm remained the Commanding Officer through 31 December 1978.

### 2. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

#### a. Chronology

1-18	January	Inport NAB Little Creek, Virginia
18-20	January	Virginia Capes
21 January - 21 February		Inport NAB Little Creek, Virginia
21-23	February	Ammunition Offload NWS Yorktown, Va.
23-24	February	Fuel Offload Craney Island, Va.
24-28	February	Inport NOB Norfolk, Va.
28	February	Underway Virginia Capes, returned same day
28 February - 8 March		Inport NOB Norfolk, Va.
8 March - --15 May		Inport Berkley, Norfolk, Va.
15 May		Underway for Sea Trails; Returned to Newport News, Va.
15 May	31 December	Inport Newport News, Va.

#### b. Narrative

The new year was observed pierside, at the Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Virginia. Nashville stayed in port until she was called upon to take the place of another ship scheduled to participate in a training exercise at Onslow Beach, North Carolina.

## Narrative (Con't)

The Marine Detachment from Camp Lejune, slated to embark in NASHVILLE for transit to the operation area, experienced transportation difficulty and arrived late on 17 January. Onloading of troops and vehicles lasted well into the night, and NASHVILLE got underway for Onslow Beach, North Carolina at 0658 the next morning.

In transit to Onslow Beach, NASHVILLE received a distress call from the Greek merchant vessel TOLMIDIS and left the formation to render assistance. When NASHVILLE arrived on the scene, the USCG cutter CHILULA was attempting to control the flooding aboard TOLMIDIS. NASHVILLE supplied additional pumping equipment and served as a local helicopter landing and fueling platform, significantly increasing the Coast Guard helicopters' "on-station" time. The rupture in TOLMIDIS' waterline was so large that de-watering attempts proved to be futile. All pumping equipment and personnel were removed from TOLMIDIS to prevent further loss.

By morning on the 19th, the flooding had progressed as far as it would and TOLMIDIS was very unstable but still afloat. The Coast Guard undertook the task of towing TOLMIDIS INEO port, and NASHVILLE left for Moorehead City, North Carolina to debark the troops that were to have been used in the training exercise.

NASHVILLE arrived in Moorehead City, offloaded the troops and equipment and returned to NAB Little Creek on the morning of 21 January. NASHVILLE remained inport until 21 February when she transited to Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Va. to off-load all ammunition in preparation for her upcoming regular overhaul.

After leaving Yorktown on 23 February, NASHVILLE steamed to the fueling piers at Craney Island, Va., and commenced the removal of excess fuel, again in preparation for overhaul. Having only a minimum quantity of fuel on-board, NASHVILLE departed Craney Island on 24 February. After a 45 minute passage, the ship was safely moored to pier 5 Naval Station, Norfolk, Va.

The ship rested quietly at pier 5 until the evening of the 27th of February when NASHVILLE was tasked to get underway and recover a Coast Guard helicopter. The helicopter had crashed 45 miles off the Virginia coast while attempting to rescue a small fishing vessel in distress, earlier that day.

Narrative (Con't)

Before NASHVILLE was called upon, both the Coast Guard and the Army (using a huge helicopter know as "Sky Crane") had attempted recovery of the downed aircraft. Neither service had mobile equipment in the area which could apply enough upward lift to raise a water filled helicopter from the sea. The boat and aircraft crane of the LPD ship type proved an excellent alternative.

Despite NASHVILLE's boilers being partially torn down in anticipation of overhaul, fires were lighted in both boilers in the early hours of the 28th and NASHVILLE was on her way at 0750 that morning. The helicopter was recovered and the ship was on its way back in just over an hour after appearing on the scene, arriving at pier 5, NOB Norfolk at 2051. Messages of appreciation were recieved from CINCLANFLT, COMMANDANT 5TH COAST GUARD DISTRICT, COMNAVSURFLANT, COM PHIBRON TWO.

A tragic accident occurred on board NASHVILLE in the afternoon of 3 March. A team of divers were cleaning the underwater hull of the ship prior to entering dry dock. One diver lost his air mask while working under the ship. He was unconscious by the time he was drawn out of the water. Although he was rushed to a hospital with-in minutes, he never recovered.

NASHVILLE entered Norfolk Ship Building and Dry Dock Inc. to commence the first phase of her second regular overhaal since commissioning in February, 1970. The first phase lasted just over two months. The major accomplishments included rudder repairs and hull sand blasting (requiring the ship to go into dry dock) and main propulsion shaft and ballast tank repair. After less than a day of sea trials, NASHVILLE entered Horne Brothers Inc. Shipyard, Newport News, Va. for phase two. There she remained through 31 December. Extensive alternations and repairs were in progress during this period.