



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),
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Subj: USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13) Command History 1981

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Encl: (1) Command History 1981

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded for calendar year 1981.


F. R. DONOVAN

USS NASHVILLE COMMAND HISTORY 1981

1. COMMAND ORGANIZATION

a. USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13) remained in Amphibious Squadron TWO from 1 January Until 27 October. From 28 October until 31 December NASHVILLE served with Amphibious Squadron FOUR.

b. The Commanding Officer of USS NASHVILLE FROM 1 January through 31 December was Captain James D. LAURANCE, USN.

2. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

a. CHRONOLOGY

1 January - 6 January	Inport Little Creek Amphibious Base
7 January - 22 January	Inport NOB, Norfolk
23 January - 7 February	Underway Vacapes
8 February - 18 February	Inport NOB Norfolk
19 February - 23 February	Underway for READEX 1-81
24 February - 25 February	Inport Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico
26 February - 6 March	Underway for READEX 1-81
7 March - 9 March	Inport NOB, Norfolk
10 March - 18 March	Underway Mine Countermeasures (MCM) 1-81 Workup
19 March - 24 April	Inport NOB, Norfolk
25 April	Underway for Charleston, South Carolina
26 April	Anchored Charleston, South Carolina
26 April - 9 May	Underway MCM 1-81
9 May - 10 May	Anchored PONTA DELGADA, Portugal
11 May - 17 May	Underway MCM 1-81
18 May - 28 May	Inport Zeebrugge, Belgium
29 May - 31 May	Underway MCM 1-81
1 June - 12 June	Anchored Firth of Forth, Scotland (Exercise Roebuck) 13 June - 15 June Inport Leith, Scotland
16 June - 19 June	Underway MCM 1-81
20 June - 22 June	Inport Portsmouth, England
23 June - 25 June	Underway MCM 1-81
26 June - 30 June	MCM Operation, Bay of Cadiz, Rota, Spain (COMORAN 1-81)

1 July - 2 July	Inport Rota, Spain
3 July - 9 July	Underway, MCM 1-81
10 July - 18 July	MCM Operation, Souda Bay, Crete (Exercise DAMSEL FAIR)
19 July	Underway, MCM 1-81
20 July - 25 July	Inport Athens, Greece
26 July - 30 July	Underway for special operations with the Sixth Fleet
31 July - 1 August	Inport Athens, Greece
2 August	Underway MCM 1-81
3 August - 5 August	Anchored, Izmir, Turkey
6 August - 10 August	MCM Operation, Izmir, Turkey (Exercise DEFT FIGHTER)
11 August - 12 August	Underway, MCM 1-81
13 August	Anchored Augusta Bay, Sicily
14 August - 17 August	Underway MCM 1-81
18 August - 27 August	Inport Palma de Mallorca, Spain
28 August - 31 August	Underway MCM 1-81
1 September - 8 September	Anchored Lisbon, Portugal
9 September - 17 September	MCM Operation, Lisbon, Portugal (Exercise OCEAN SAFARI)
18 September - 7 October	Underway MCM 1-81
8 October - 9 October	Underway for Norfolk, Virginia
10 October - 22 November	Inport NOB Norfolk
23 November	Underway READEX 2-81
24 November	Inport Morehead City, North Carolina
24 November - 29 November	Underway READEX 2-81
29 November - 30 November	Anchored Ilse de Vieques, Puerto Rico
1 December - 4 December	Inport NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico
5 December - 6 December	Anchored St. Thomas Island, Virgin Isles
7 December - 12 December	Underway READEX 2-81
13 December - 31 December	Inport Little Creek, Virginia

Enclosure (1)

b. Narrative

The year 1981 proved to be an eventful year in the history of the USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13). In April, NASHVILLE began an unprecedented five and one-half month mine countermeasures deployment to the Mediterranean, where she operated in conjunction with NATO forces and units from other European nations. This deployment, the first time NASHVILLE has been utilized in such a function, displayed the versatility of the LPD class ship and its ability to adapt to different mission roles.

NASHVILLE began the year pierside at the Little Creek Amphibious Base as part of Amphibious Squadron TWO. On 6 January, NASHVILLE moved to more familiar surroundings at the Naval Station, Norfolk. An inport period followed, in which NASHVILLE passed the rigorous Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) inspection. On 23 January NASHVILLE was underway for flight operations in the Vacapes region. On 8 February NASHVILLE re-entered port in Norfolk.

On 19 February the crew again found themselves underway, this time for drone recovery operations as part of READDEX 1-81 in the Caribbean. Roosevelt Roads was the specific destination, as NASHVILLE worked as part of a carrier battle group, including the USS AMERICA (CV-66), the USS MT. WHITNEY (LCC- 20) and the USS TEXAS (CGN 39).

On 7 March, NASHVILLE returned to Norfolk. On 10 March she departed for Charleston, South Carolina, to take part in the workup for the Mine Counter Measures (MCM) 1-81 deployment. NASHVILLE embarked a detachment of four RH-53D (Sea Stallion) mine-sweeping helicopters from HELMINERON FOURTEEN under the command of CDR F. T. MASSEY and an explosive ordnance detachment (EOD) team. A COMINWARCOM staff embarked to oversee and coordinate the surface and air MCM operations. Limitations and abilities, once realized here, proved to be important lessons in the upcoming deployment.

NASHVILLE returned to Norfolk 19 March, and a stand down period followed. NASHVILLE deployed on the 25th of April. The first stop was Charleston, South Carolina on the 26th of April. Here, the surface MCM units were embarked and loaded. Nashville turned her bow to the East that same day and cruised to rendezvous with her two MSO counterparts, USS ILLUSIVE (MSO-448) and USS LEADER (MSO-490), who were to be her almost constant companions during the next five months.

NASHVILLE did not see port again until 9 May when extremely bad weather forced the NASHVILLE and the two MSO's to seek a safe haven. Receiving permission from Portugese authorities, the MCM task force pulled into the Azores at Ponta Delgada on 9 May. Here the MSO's weathered the storm, and the group was again bound for the European continent on 11 May.

On 18 May NASHVILLE arrived at her first scheduled liberty port of the deployment, Zeebrugge, Belgium. A layover period here was enjoyed by the crew, as many took time to visit the historic sites of Western Europe.

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On 29 May, NASHVILLE neaded for Edinborough, Scotland. She arrived in the Firth of Forth, Scotland, on 1 June. While anchored, NASHVILLE participated in the NATO exercise "Roebuck." Here the MCM task force operated with the Standing Naval Force Atlantic (STANAVFORCHAN), conducting both surface and air MCM operations. NASHVILLE acted as the command and control ship for the exercise from June 4th through June 15th, as minesweepers from several Northern European NATO nations participated. The MCM task force cleared a safe channel through a field of exercise mines for shipping to pass safely into and out of the North Sea, proving the worth of a multi-national MCM task group.

Originally next bound for France, a change in plans re-routed the NASHVILLE south to England, where she arrived in Portsmouth on 20 June. Here NASHVILLE was moored at a berth directly across from HMS VICTORY, Lord Admiral Nelson's Flagship at his decisive victory off Cape Trafalagar in 1804, preserved today as a national memorial.

On 23 June, NASHVILLE departed for Rota, Spain. She entered Rota safely on 26 June. In the Bay of Cadiz, outside Rota, NASHVILLE participated in the second MCM exercise of the deployment, "CORMORAN-81." Here Spanish MCM forces operated with the task force, and again the operation was a success.

NASHVILLE transited the Straits of Gibraltar on the 3rd of July, bound for the Island of Crete. From July 10th to July 18th, NASHVILLE operated off the Island in Operation "DAMSEL FAIR." Completing its third MCM exercise, NASHVILLE departed for Athens, Greece, arriving there on 20 July. NASHVILLE's stay in Athens was interrupted on 26 July when she was called away for special operations with the Sixth Fleet. NASHVILLE returned to Athens on 31 July, and left the birthplace of democracy on 1 August, steaming for Izmir, Turkey.

Arriving in Izmir on 3 August, another successful MCM operation took place August 6th through 10th, with elements of the Turkish Navy, in Operation "DEFT FIGHTER-81." The next stop for the NASHVILLE was Augusta Bay, Sicily, where stores and fuel were received.

Underway again on 14 August, NASHVILLE moored at Palma de Mallorca, Spain, from the 18th through the 28th of August. Here the crew enjoyed a great liberty port, the hospitality of the Spanish people, and the fine weather. NASHVILLE departed Palma de Mallorca on the 28th of August for Lisbon, Portugal. She arrived in Lisbon the 1st of September. This last liberty port was an exciting and interesting experience for all hands.

Following this port visit, on 9 September, the task force began its last, and largest MCM exercise. Operating with over 30 ships from various allied countries in a theater-wide exercise, the NASHVILLE played an integral role in the success of "OCEAN SAFARI." Here the harbor approaches to Lisbon were simulated mined by enemy aircraft. After several days of hard work, the MCM task force cleared a safe channel for a convoy to transit, making this operation also a success.

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Completing a successful MCM deployment, NASHVILLE departed for home waters on the 18th of September. Slowing her rate of speed so the MSO's would not be left alone in rough seas, the NASHVILLE did not arrive in Charleston until the 8th of October. Finally, on the 10th of October, NASHVILLE moored at the Naval Operations Base, Norfolk, with many thanks and a proud heart.

NASHVILLE was not underway again until the 23rd of November departing then for Morehead City, North Carolina, to pick up a Marine Unit BLT 1/6 en route to the Caribbean to participate in READEX 2-81. She arrived in Morehead City on the 24th of November, then was underway until anchoring at Isle de Vieques, Puerto Rico, on the 29th of November. Here the amphibious portion of READEX 2-81 was completed, which included NASHVILLE providing Naval Gunfire Support (NGFS) on Vieques. On the 1st of December, she anchored at the U. S. Naval Base at Roosevelt Roads. Underway once more on the 5th of December, NASHVILLE arrived at St. Thomas Island the same day. This port provided fantastic liberty. On the 7th of December, NASHVILLE departed the island for Morehead City.

On the 13th of December, NASHVILLE returned to the Little Creek Amphibious Base, Norfolk. There she remained for the duration of the year. For the crew of the NASHVILLE, It was an eventful year, but not without many rewards.

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