



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13)
FLEET POST OFFICE
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From: Commanding Officer, USS NASHVILLE (LPD-13)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Op-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1985

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5720.12C

Encl: (1) Ship's History for 1985

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded.


JAMES C. VAN SLYKE, JR.

Copy to:
COMPHIBRON TWELVE

COMMAND HISTORY

The year 1985 opened with the appointment of a new Commanding Officer, Captain James C. Van Slyke, Jr., and busy preparations for a Mediterranean deployment. The crew of USS NASHVILLE returned from the holiday leave periods and made ready for sustained overseas operations. Advance liaison personnel began to arrive and plan the staging of cargo and special equipment. Members of MSSG 22, Seal Delivery Team TWO, Beachmaster Unit TWO, Special Boat Unit TWO and Assault Craft Unit TWO embarked as part of MARG 1-85.

On a bitter cold twenty-third day of January, USS NASHVILLE departed Pier 7 enroute to anchorage and ballasting operations for pickup of LCU-1658, two causeway tender boats and a Seafox from SBU-2.

NASHVILLE arrived in Morehead City, N.C. to commence the onload of MSSG 22 and Fox Company of 24 MAU on 24 January. While unloading troops and equipment, Major General Miller, Commander Second Marine Division arrived to observe the operation and say farewell.

Early on the morning of the 25th, NASHVILLE sortied to rendezvous with USS SAIPAN (LHA 2) and USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY (LST 1192) and began the transit eastward to Rota, Spain. Colonel M. C. Harrington, Commander 24 MAU was embarked on USS SAIPAN which also served as flagship to Commander Amphibious Squadron Eight, Captain C. G. Felkins. Lieutenant Colonel W. S. Sloan, Commanding Officer MSSG 22, was embarked aboard USS NASHVILLE. The transit was an eventful and busy one with extensive drills, training packages and exercises designed to hone the skills and professionalism of the Navy-Marine Corps team.

A heavy emphasis on training was instilled in all hands and it quickly paid off in terms of operational readiness and an unmatched ability for mission flexibility and execution. Turnover began 4 February upon arrival in Rota and was accomplished in two days. The ship received approximately 446,000 gallons of F-76 fuel oil and departed with USS SAIPAN (LHA 2) and USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY (LST 1192) for Sierra de Retin, Spain. Upon arrival for amphibious operations, it was discovered that the rough beach conditions were totally unsuitable for small and medium assault craft.

Debarkation of troops and equipment was completed via LCU and helicopter airlift. After a successful backload, NASHVILLE proceeded to transit the Straits of Gibraltar on 12 February and transit to Cartagena, Spain.

A flight deck picnic and cake cutting ceremony marked NASHVILLE's fifteenth birthday celebration on 14 February.

On the 18th of February NASHVILLE arrived in Cartagena, the first of many port visits. Of major concern were condensor repairs and topside-hull preservation. The ship's Chaplain, Commander [REDACTED], and a group of volunteers completed repairs on electrical equipment and facilities at a children's school for the deaf. Commander [REDACTED] also performed a magic show for the children and their parents.

Departed Cartagena 25 February to rendezvous with USS SAVANNAH (AOR 4), for FAS, CONREP and VERTREP. Arrived in Barcelona, Spain 1 March, began topside preservation and opened number 1 boiler to check the desuperheater as a

suspected source of chloride contamination. A Department of Defense USO Show featured "Kings 8" on the flight deck, and provided excellent entertainment for all onboard.

NASHVILLE departed Barcelona on 8 March and conducted a replenishment with USS SAVANNAH on 9 March.

Proceeded east to Augusta Bay, Sicily for briefings and planning conferences regarding the multinational exercise, Sardinia 85. The three ship MARG was joined by Italian, French and Spanish naval forces in transit to Capo Teulada, Sardinia on 13 March. MARG 1-85 transited the Straits of Messina in the company of NATO units on 14 March. Upon arrival at Capo Tuelada, the advance multinational reconnaissance units were inserted by NASHVILLE. An assault rehearsal was carried out and the actual D-Day assaults were flawless, despite the snow and bitter cold. Operation Sardinia 85 was a great success from a command, control and coordination viewpoint. Valuable training and experience were gained and put to good use.

NASHVILLE departed Sardinia and headed towards Marseille, France. While enroute, a RAS and VERTREP were conducted with USS SYLVANIA (AFS 2) on 19 March and another CONREP-VERTREP was conducted with the USS CONCORD (AFS 5) on 23 March.

On 25 March the three ships of MARG 1-85 arrived in Marseilles, France to begin the first maintenance availability of the deployment. While in Marseille, Commander Palmer and a group of volunteers repaired a theatre hall and restored a home for the poor. In a soccer match, a group of teenagers from the Concorde Orphanage soundly defeated a combined Navy-Marine team.

Several tours were sponsored by NASHVILLE's Welfare and Recreation Board. The Wives Club organized a trip to Marseille and many were reunited with their husbands. The MARG departed Marseille on 12 April for continued drills and training while enroute to Genoa, Italy. NASHVILLE and SPARTANBURG COUNTY arrived in Genoa and completed a Mediterranean mooring, using the sterngate as a quarterdeck area. Genoa, the birthplace of Christopher Columbus, proved to be a memorable port visit. Topside preservation continued and a ship's boat, LCPL-2, was restored and repainted.

NASHVILLE and SPARTANBURG COUNTY departed Genoa 20 April and proceeded to rendezvous with USS SAIPAN (LHA 2). Conducted RAS with USNS NEOSHO (T-A0 143) and a VERTREP with USS CONCORD (AFS 5) on 21 April. Several selected exercises were completed and SDV operations were conducted while NASHVILLE proceeded independently to a port visit in Ajaccio, Corsica. Arrived 23 April and successfully moored to an anchor buoy, providing valuable experience for the bridge team and deck personnel.

Extensive small boat training was held and all liberty boat runs were completed safely and without incident. Tours of NASHVILLE were provided to members of the French Garrison and townspeople who reciprocated with an extensive tour of the city and surrounding countryside for sailors and marines alike.

NASHVILLE departed for Capo Teulada on 3 May to participate in Distant Hammer 85, the largest exercise planned for the deployment. British Special Air Services and Special Boat Squadron units arrived onboard to prepare for joint insertion with Navy Seals. Assault rehearsals were held to smooth out the rough spots resulting in picture perfect D-Day operations as NASHVILLE carried out the

duties of primary control ship. Phase II of Distant Hammer went smoothly as a combined task force of amphibious ships and escorts transited the Straits of Messina against an array of opposing surface, subsurface and air elements.

NASHVILLE proceeded to rendezvous with USS KALAMAZOO (AOR 6) and USS CONCORD (AFS 5) for FAS and VERTREP on 13 May. Preparations were made to transit to Venice where the first of two groups of midshipmen would be embarked. The trip north through the Adriatic was exceptionally smooth with seas like glass, although there was a very heavy fog the day we entered port. Arrived at Venice and all its splendor on 16 May with a breathtaking transit up the canals. Both the crew and Marines enjoyed the sights and hospitality of the city.

Departed Venice on 24 May and proceeded to a night FAS with USNS TRUCKEE (T-AO 147). NASHVILLE continued south towards Torre Veneri at the heel of Italy's boot. Upon arrival, the SDV Team and SDV were crossdecked to USS OPPORTUNE (ARS 41) for training. The ship's self defense force gained experience in preparing and executing measures to fend off small, high speed surface craft as the Seafox from Special Boat Unit 2 participated. NASHVILLE served as PCS for the offload of troops and equipment. Another USO show by the group "Mass Ave" was held on the flight deck, where they performed a variety of rock and rhythm and blues selections.

Backload was accomplished quickly and the MARG departed for Pian de Spille for another operation. NASHVILLE again served as PCS and accomplished the insertion of a Beach Survey Team, Seafox and the SDV. A sortie followed to the Sea Echelon Area for over the horizon operations utilizing the Seafox with ship's company aboard. Vice Admiral Kelso, Commander Sixth Fleet visited NASHVILLE while anchored at Pian de Spille. The visit to Gibraltar drew near with preparations completed to make the most of a scheduled maintenance availability while there. NASHVILLE transited in company with USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY (LST 1192) and conducted a CONREP and VERTREP with USS SYLVANIA (AFS 2) on 11 June. The midshipmen onboard since Venice manned a 3"/50 gun and completed a calibration firing exercise. A successful Z-13-CC maneuvering exercise was also completed. The training and experience gained by the midshipmen proved invaluable. Thorough planning and active involvement by the ship's company resulted in a training environment which was outstanding in every respect.

Arrived in Gibraltar 13 June to commence repair work and provide an evaluation of Gib-Repair Ltd. for future Sixth Fleet contracts. On 15 June a number of officers and crewmembers were invited to attend festivities held to honor the Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II. The stay in Gibraltar was short lived however, as orders were received to sortie as quickly as possible to support contingency operations resulting from an airliner hijacking in Athens and subsequent internment of hostages by terrorists in Beirut, Lebanon. The special warfare units aboard NASHVILLE immediately departed via other means as ship's company worked feverishly to correct a steering casualty in record time.

NASHVILLE departed Gibraltar in the early morning of 17 June and headed east to rendezvous with USS SAIPAN (LHA 2) and USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY (LST 1192). Extensive readiness checks were conducted on defensive systems, including the stinger missile teams and chaff launchers. Rendezvous was completed 20 June with SAIPAN and SPARTANBURG COUNTY as all units continued to steam eastward at best speed available. As preparations and training for hostilities were continued, all were confident that NASHVILLE was more than ready for any task. All special warfare units returned to NASHVILLE as small arms and .50 caliber machine gun training intensified. USS KALAMAZOO (AOR 6) provided refueling and vertrep services

enroute. Arrived at assigned MODLOC position approximately 60 miles off the coast of Beirut in company with carrier battle group elements of U.S. Sixth Fleet. Conducted extensive firing of 3"/50 guns, CIWS and small arms daily. USS SYLVANIA provided services in a CONREP 28 June. Two selected exercises, Z-30-S and Z-31-S for fuel delivery and emergency breakaway procedures were successfully completed with USS SPARTANBURG COUNTY on 2 July.

A VERTREP with USS NITRO (AE 23) and USS SYLVANIA (AFS 2) was conducted on 5 July. The mail received from home was the highlight of the day. The crew continued to develop their proficiency during quick draw gunshoots and small arms famfires. The second group of midshipmen aboard obtained outstanding training experience. USNS NEOSHO (T-AO 143) provided fuel on 7 July. Man overboard maneuvering drills continued to develop the conning skills of the midshipmen. Seal and SDV team members conducted orientation training and assault demonstrations for crewmembers and midshipmen alike. USNS SIRIUS (AFS 8) provided fuel and groceries on 12 July in preparation for NASHVILLE's transit west which began 14 July. All aboard looked forward to the turnover with units of MARG 2-85, which was completed on 17 July.

The units of MARG 1-85 continued to steam westward in anticipation of exercises in Morocco. USNS TRUCKEE (T-AO 147) provided fuel on 19 July. NASHVILLE arrived off the coast of Morocco on 20 July and commenced offload of aggressor forces and special warfare units. The command 3M inspection was conducted by a Sixth Fleet team and NASHVILLE successfully completed this test as well.

The landing support of troops ashore and backload went without a hitch as NASHVILLE made ready for the transit to Rota, Spain. After completing the washdown of the ship and all equipment that went ashore, final preparations were made for the transatlantic voyage. Maximum efforts in topside preservation were continued and a Virginia State Trooper arrived with a Navy Return and Reunion team. Briefings on changes in state laws, family relationships and a smooth transition to life "stateside" were emphasized and received enthusiastically by the crew.

Preparations began for the Gator Cruise and offload in Morehead City, North Carolina well in advance for these events. Cargo was brought to the flight deck from both upper and lower vehicle stowage for repositioning purposes.

The offload proceeded rapidly in Morehead City, North Carolina, and family members and friends embarked in anticipation of the Gator Cruise evolutions. Proceeded to Norfolk on the afternoon of 8 August, conducted firing of the CIWS and 3"/50 guns and received fuel from USS SAVANNAH (AOR 4) in preparation for entering port.

USS NASHVILLE arrived in Norfolk on 9 August after a highly successful deployment. A 30 day leave and upkeep period ensued upon arrival as the crew conducted business in the less demanding atmosphere of homeport.

On 25 September NASHVILLE executed an emergency SORTIE in the face of hurricane Kate. The crew was ready within four hours of notification and the ship proceeded rapidly and safely to ride out the storm.

The offload of all ammunition and explosives was completed in an excellent fashion at Yorktown Naval Weapons Station in October. NASHVILLE was now ready to enter a restricted maintenance availability with Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity Norfolk and a concurrent availability with USS PUGET

SOUND (AD 38). The last calendar quarter of 1985 brought much needed repairs and improvements to shipboard equipment. Both of the ship's boilers were rebricked, and a heat stress improvement modification was completed in the main machinery spaces. All fuel and feed pumps received rebuilt constant pressure regulators, and overhauls were completed on the governors of all 4 forced draft blowers. Number 1 emergency diesel generator underwent bearing overhaul, major repair and testing.

On 19 November LCDR J. D. May, USNR, was relieved by LCDR T. R. Morrison, USN, as Executive Officer of USS NASHVILLE.

Next to the Engineering Department, Deck Department had the largest maintenance package onboard. The ship's boat and aircraft crane underwent extensive repairs and was weight tested. Four of the five ship's boats were reconditioned and the motor whale boat davits and winch were completely overhauled, reinstalled and weight tested. Extensive replacement of damaged batterboards in the well deck was completed as well as gasket replacement on the stern gate. All running and standing rigging was pull tested and the ship received sorely needed cargo handling equipment.

NASHVILLE also served as flagship to several senior officers and their staffs in late 1985. Commander Second Fleet, Commander Amphibious Group TWO, and Commander, Amphibious Squadron TWO were embarked.

During the Christmas leave period repair work continued in preparation for a challenging year of commitments, which USS NASHVILLE stands ready to meet, wherever and whenever called upon.

EMBARKED UNITS

Lieutenant Colonel W. S. Sloan, Commanding Officer MSSG 22
Major R. T. Forte, Executive Officer MSSG 22
Captain D. C. Hamil, Commanding Officer Fox Company 24 MAU
CWO4 Rogers, Officer In Charge BMU-2, ACB-2, ACU-2 Detachments
10 Man Sixth Fleet Stinger SAM Unit Detachment
LT S. Hill, Officer in Charge Seal Detachment 2
LT E. Thompson Officer in Charge SDV Detachment 2, SBU-2

USS NASHVILLE (LPD 13)

Captain J. C. Van Slyke, Jr., Commanding Officer Dec 84
LCDR J. D. May, Executive Officer until Nov 85
LCDR T. R. Morrison, Executive Officer Nov 85
LCDR [REDACTED], Air Officer
LCDR [REDACTED], Supply Officer until Dec 85
LT [REDACTED], Supply Officer Dec 85
LCDR [REDACTED], Engineering Officer until Oct 85
LT [REDACTED], Engineering Officer Dec 85
LT [REDACTED], First Lieutenant until Sep 85
LT [REDACTED] First Lieutenant Sep 85
LT [REDACTED], Operations Officer

EMBARKED FLAG OFFICERS AND STAFF

COMPHIBRON TWO Captain R. J. Ianucci
COMPHIBGRU TWO RADM R. B. Rogers, Capt M. M. France COS
COMSECONDFLT VADM H. C. Mustin, Capt J. B. Best COS

STATISTICAL DATA

Burned 3,446,402 gallons of F-76 fuel oil.
Delivered 120,148 gallons of JP-5 aviation fuel.
Expended 188 rounds 3"/50 ammunition.
Expended 2,257 rounds of 20mm ammunition.
Number of underway replenishments - 16.