



USS NASSAU (LHA-4)
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From: Commanding Officer, USS NASSAU (LHA 4)
To: Director of Naval History, OP-09BH, Washington Navy Yard, Washington,
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Encl: (1) History of USS NASSAU (LHA 4) from 1 Jan 1982 through 31 May 1983

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


R. H. JESBERG

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CNO (OP-05D2)

COMMAND HISTORY OF USS NASSAU (LHA 4) - 1 JAN 1982 THROUGH 31 MAY 1983

On January 19, 1982, NASSAU departed for a five-and-a-half month Mediterranean Sea/Indian Ocean cruise with the 34th Marine Amphibious Unit embarked. During deployment, NASSAU participated in four amphibious operations. One of them, NATO exercise DISTANT DRUM 82, was among the largest amphibious exercises conducted during the year. NASSAU also visited five countries during the deployment. Port calls were made in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands; Palma de Majorca, Spain; Mombassa, Kenya; Ashdod, Isreal; Athens, Greece; Toulon, France; Barcelona, Spain; and Rota, Spain.

NASSAU returned to Norfolk on June 30, 1982 for a six week stand-down period. NASSAU departed homeport in August to assume major responsibilities in NATO exercises conducted in the North Atlantic.

After embarking Marines from Brigade Service Support Group (BSSG-4) at Morehead City, North Carolina on August 25th, NASSAU joined 25 other ships in a convoy transiting the Atlantic. Wartime conditions were simulated for the exercises UNITED EFFORT and SHORT ENGAGEMENT.

Harrier jets flew aboard on September 7, staged live bombing runs on the northwest coast of Scotland two days later, and flew regular training sorties beginning on September 12. Four Marine fire-support aircraft, the OV-10 "Broncos" launched the same day and departed for their exercise base in Denmark.

The flight of the Broncos was a first for NASSAU and only the second time that the aircraft have flown as part of an operation from an Atlantic Fleet ship.

After the initial Atlantic transit, NASSAU took part in NATO exercises NORTHERN WEDDING and BOLD GUARD. In addition to amphibious support, she provided air cover for both exercises. NORTHERN WEDDING involved landing Marines in Esjbera, Denmark as part of a coordinated amphibious operation where they joined other units of the task force from the Atlantic Fleet. Amphibious assaults at Lolland, Denmark and Putlos Bay, West Germany highlighted BOLD GUARD, which ended September 24, 1983.

Approximately 160 ships and 250 aircraft participated in NORTHERN WEDDING - the largest exercise ever during NASSAU's three-year history.

The time at sea was followed by a two-week port call in Portsmouth, U. K. Pulling in on September 30, NASSAU's crew enjoyed liberty with tours in the U. K. and continent available.

Enroute to Norfolk NASSAU conducted a successful missile firing exercise with a score of 98.

On October 30, NASSAU returned to Norfolk for a well-deserved stand-down and holiday leave period.

NASSAU became the first LHA to complete Airborne Mine Counter Measures Readiness Inspections in a two-day exercise which began on November 30 at Lynnhaven Anchorage.

The new year, 1983, saw NASSAU enter the Norfolk Naval Shipyard for a Selected Restricted Availability (SRA). NASSAU entered the shipyard on January 4 and, for the next two months, received major modifications to engineering and assault systems along with installation of an improved, first-of-a-kind, intelligence center.

NASSAU departed the shipyard and set sail for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, on March 11 to undertake her first Interim Refresher Training period. She left Guantanamo Bay on April 2. In the interim, NASSAU's Engineering Department attained certification in the Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE); her Flying Squad, the at-sea fire-fighting team, scored significant successes in graded exercises and repair parties scored well in damage control evaluations.

On the way back to Norfolk, superb coordination between NASSAU's Combat Systems and Navigation Departments led to a Naval Gunfire Support qualification at Vieques, Puerto Rico. This exercise was immediately followed by a live missile firing exercise.

NASSAU again sortied south from Norfolk on April 23, enroute to Morehead City, North Carolina to commence participation in SOLID SHIELD 83. After embarking Marines there, NASSAU returned to waters off Virginia Beach to conduct rehearsal amphibious landings at Camp Pendleton.

Phase II of SOLID SHIELD saw NASSAU subjected to simulated attacks from Coast Guard and Navy ships, submarines and assorted aircraft. NASSAU's bridge, Combat Information Center (CIC) and Tactical Action Officer (TAO) coordinated a vigorous response. NASSAU launched an amphibious assault on the first of May, supporting Marine landing forces. Phase II ended when NASSAU embarked COMPHIBGRU TWO. Phase III provided a stern test for NASSAU's command and control systems. As a whole, SOLID SHIELD 83 offered NASSAU the opportunity to conduct some very elaborate amphibious operations.

NASSAU sailors enjoyed a port visit in Fort Lauderdale, Florida from May 6 through May 8 enroute to Norfolk. Shortly after arriving in homeport, NASSAU performed very well during an inspection by the Sub-board of Inspection and Survey.