



USS NASSAU (LHA-4)
FPO NEW YORK 09557

1984

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From: Commanding Officer, USS NASSAU (LHA 4)
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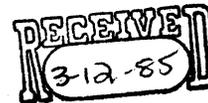
Encl: (1) Command History for USS NASSAU (LHA 4) for period
1 Jan - 31 Dec 1984

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


R. H. JESBERG

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Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

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COMMAND HISTORY OF USS NASSAU (LHA 4) - 1 JANUARY THROUGH 31 DECEMBER 1984

USS NASSAU began 1984 with more than two weeks of preparations for deploying to the Mediterranean. The ship got underway from its homeport of Norfolk, VA, on 3 January for Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group (MARG) 2-84 workups and conducted an ammunition onload on 6 January. NASSAU embarked units of the 24th Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) 24 at Onslow Bay/Morehead City, NC on 10 January. The Marines were landed ashore at Onslow Bay during an amphibious assault exercise on 18 January as part of the workups. NASSAU returned to Norfolk on 19 January.

On 13 February, NASSAU began a 194-day deployment when she departed Norfolk for Morehead City. Three days later, NASSAU embarked nearly 1000 Marines from 24 MAU and its component units -- Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 263, Marine Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 3/8 and Marine Service Support Group (MSSG) 26. Also embarked in Nassau were Amphibious Squadron Six, Surgical Team Ten and elements of Beach Group Two and Tactical Squadron 21.

En route to the Mediterranean, NASSAU participated in two exercises, United Effort '84 and Teamwork '84. United Effort, which took place from 18 February to 5 March, was a NATO Atlantic transit exercise that simulated wartime conditions and included units from the U.S., Canadian and British navies.

Exercise Teamwork, which took place from 28 February to 22 March, overlapped United Effort and included a live firing exercise off Cape Wrath, Scotland, on 7 March. The live firing exercise took place after NASSAU transited the Irish Sea on her way to the fjords of northern Norway. On 12 March, NASSAU launched landing craft and helicopters loaded with Marines for a rehearsal landing in Trondheim Fjord. Two days later, NASSAU crossed the Arctic Circle and the majority of Navy men and Marines aboard had their noses painted blue in the time-honored blue nose ceremony.

On 16 March NASSAU took part in the D-Day assault in Malangen Fjord, along with 150 ships and 300 aircraft from the United States and other NATO nations, in one of the largest amphibious operations ever conducted at that latitude --150 miles north of the Arctic Circle. NASSAU backloaded the Marines and their equipment on 22 March, ending Teamwork '84.

NASSAU then transited the North Sea on a storm evasion course and passed through the English Channel en route to Rota, Spain, arriving 30 March. On 1 April, NASSAU in-chopped to the Mediterranean, changing from Second Fleet to Sixth Fleet operational control. The ship set readiness condition three watch on 4 April and on 7 April arrived on-station off the coast of Beirut, Lebanon. NASSAU served as flagship for the three-ship MARG 2-84 during the deployment, after relieving USS GUAM (LPH 9), flagship for the five-ship MARG 1-84. From 7-9 April, 115 Marines from MARG 2-84 were deployed ashore in Beirut as part of the embassy's external security.

On 12 May, NASSAU embarked a detachment from Helicopter Combat Support Squadron Four. The Black Stallions of HC-4 carried priority cargo, passengers and mail for NASSAU and other units of MARG 2-84 during the remainder of the deployment. During the deployment, NASSAU recorded more than 7,900 helicopter landings on her flight deck and moved 6,000 passengers and 350 tons of mail and priority cargo.

Enclosure (1)

NASSAU's first liberty visit to Haifa, Israel, took place 15-20 May, after 46 consecutive days at sea. On 21 May, she embarked the first of several groups of midshipmen for their summer cruises. A highlight of the deployment occurred on 29 May with NASSAU's 20,000th landing.

From 18-22 June, NASSAU sailors and Marines again enjoyed liberty in Haifa. During the port visit, a second group of midshipmen embarked and the first group debarked.

On the 4th of July, NASSAU began her longest port visit (4-23 July) to Haifa by hosting several hundred Israelis for an Independence Day celebration on the flight deck that included full dress ship, a picnic, colors ceremony and music by the ship's bands. From 13-23 July, NASSAU completed an IMAV with USS PUGET SOUND (AD 38). Midshipmen were debarked on 18 July. The ship completed the month of July by backloading the Marines supporting the U.S. Embassy in Beirut on 31 July.

NASSAU departed the Eastern Mediterranean on 2 August. En route to Rota, Spain, NASSAU conducted a successful missile exercise on 6 August and debarked the HC-4 detachment. NASSAU arrived in Rota on 8 August for equipment washdown and returned to Second Fleet operational control on 11 August, when she began her transit of the Atlantic. From 20-22 August NASSAU completed a highly successful Supply Management Inspection.

On 22 and 23 August, NASSAU offloaded the units of 24 MAU at Onslow Bay/Morehead City and embarked more than 200 fathers, sons and brothers for the cruise back to Norfolk. NASSAU arrived in her homeport on 24 August.

During her six-and-a-half-month deployment, NASSAU steamed 30,082 nautical miles and was at sea for 157 days, 46 of them consecutively. Helicopters embarked in NASSAU consumed more than 500,000 gallons of aviation fuel during the deployment and made close to 8,000 landings.

When Hurricane Diana threatened the Hampton Roads area in mid-September NASSAU, along with many other ships homeported in the area, sortied to hurricane anchorage. NASSAU remained at hurricane anchorage in Chesapeake Bay from 11 to 14 September. On 29 September, NASSAU served as flagship for the Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic change of command ceremony.

In preparation for entering the shipyard for repairs, NASSAU conducted an ammunition offload on 2 and 3 October. On 25 October, NASSAU entered Norfolk Shipbuilding and Drydock Company (NORSHIPCO) for an availability. While at NORSHIPCO, repairs were made to NASSAU's boilers/ballast system and new communications equipment was installed. NASSAU was in drydock for two periods, 2-6 November and 19 November to 2 December.

The ship departed NORSHIPCO 13 December, a week early, for two days of sea trials. On 15 December another group of midshipmen embarked. Following successful sea trials, NASSAU conducted ammunition onload on 17 and 18 December and conducted operations in the Virginia Capes area on 19 and 20 December in preparation for an operational propulsion plant examination. NASSAU spent the remainder of the year in port Norfolk.