



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS TARAWA (LHA-1)

FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

LHA1/00:gws

5750

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From: Commanding Officer, USS TARAWA (LHA 1)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09B9), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, DC 20390

Subj: Command History - 1977

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Basic History

1. Enclosure (1) is submitted in accordance with reference (a).

S. P. HUHN

Acting

COMMAND HISTORY 1977  
USS TARAWA (LHA 1)

The first of the year found TARAWA at Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego, California. Anticipating the upcoming at sea periods for Carrier Qualifications, Boat Operations, Flight Training and various internal drills.

January and February were months of many drills and training periods at sea for TARAWA. Final Contract Trials were conducted and drills and evolutions were evaluated for efficiency and operational capability.

March was filled with a total evaluation of the ship. The Special Purpose Validation/Operational Evaluation (SPV/OPEVAL) included all facets of operation for TARAWA. During this period at 0312, 23 March 1977 "Man Overboard" was sounded. Prompt action on the part of all watch standers contributed to the 17 minute recovery time of the man. All hands acted in the highest traditions of the Navy and once again showed that training is a most important aspect of going to sea.

Upkeep and training availability took up all of April and a good portion of May. The latter part of May was spent at sea for various tests. The washdown counter measure system was tested and two burials at sea were conducted. The Board of Inspection and Survey was embarked on 24 May and they conducted various tests and drills also.

Being the first of a class of ships, TARAWA was tasked to undergo "Shock Trials" off of San Clemente Island. The tests were conducted over a one week period and consisted of four blasts detonated at various distances from the ship. This was done to test her structural stability and to find weak points in various areas. TARAWA pulled through in good shape. Those areas found weak were strengthened during the yard period and following ships were able to incorporate the stronger material/welding, etc. in their construction. This exercise, along with boat operations filled up the month of June.

July was spent at 32nd St. Naval Station for an upkeep period and also getting ready for the August Dependents Cruise. Secretary of the Navy, W. Graham Claytor, Jr., visited the USS TARAWA on 22 July 1977.

On 9 August TARAWA embarked approximately 3021 guests for a tour of the harbor and a cruise off of Southern California. During the cruise, lunch was served and various evolutions were observed taking place such as Flight Operations, Well Deck Operations and many displays set up by participating departments. Total underway time was seven and one half hours. 0900 underway with 1630 arrival time back at North Island. At 0802, 13 August TARAWA got underway for Long Beach Naval Shipyard for her Post Shakedown Availability/Restricted Availability period. At 1634, 13 August, TARAWA moored port side to Pier Echo LBNSY.

On September 13, TARAWA was moved from Pier Echo into Drydock #1. At 1305 that day, TARAWA was resting on Keel Blocks in Drydock #1. On 22 September TARAWA was visited by FMF PAC Lieutenant General Brown and FMF LANT Lieutenant General Barrow.

On 31 October TARAWA was visited by the Commandant of the Marine Corps General Wilson. The Command Brief was shown and a tour given to show the Navy's newest Amphibious Ship to the Commandant.

At 0707, 22 November TARAWA was waterborne. 0806 the Caisson was moved and TARAWA was moved back to Pier Echo with PSA/RAV work in progress.

Awards won by TARAWA during 1977 included the Air Department "E"; the Supply Department "E" and the Communications Department "C" for efficiency in their particular fields.