



COMMANDING OFFICER

USS CANOPUS (AS-34)
FPO NEW YORK 09501

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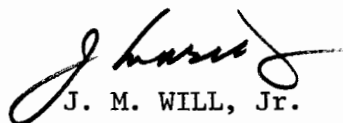
From: Commanding Officer, USS CANOPUS (AS-34)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09B9) Washington Navy Yard, Washington,
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Subj: Command History, 1976 (Report Symbol 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Basic History
(2) Change of Command Pamphlet
(3) Current Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
(4) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet (Spanish)
(5) Current Picture

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (5) are submitted as the Command History for USS CANOPUS (AS-34) for calendar year 1976.


J. M. WILL, Jr.

COMMAND ORGANIZATION

CANOPUS was under operational control of Submarine Group SIX, Charleston, South Carolina from 1 January 1976 until 6 December 1976 when operational control passed to Submarine Squadron SIXTEEN, homeported in Rota, Spain. The Commanding Officer, Captain Milton P. ALEXICH, USN, served until 12 June 1976 when Captain John M. WILL, Jr., USN assumed command at Charleston Naval Shipyard, Charleston, South Carolina. The Executive Officer, CDR Samuel W. ADAMS, Jr., served throughout the entire year.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1976

5 JAN	Commence overhaul Charleston Naval Shipyard
12 JAN	Secured berthing and messing aboard
23 FEB	Entered drydock #5 Charleston Naval Shipyard
30 APR	Left drydock #5
12 JUN	Captain John M. WILL, Jr. assumed command
14 JUL	Navy Distillate Certification and completion of boiler and Steam Plant shipyard work
15 JUL	Steam plant light off
9 AUG	Open general mess
10 AUG	Dock trials
11 AUG	Fast Cruise
12-13 AUG	Sea Trials
14 AUG	Commenced moving personnel back aboard
28 AUG	End overhaul
30 AUG	Commenced Supply backload
27-28 SEP	CINCLANTFLT Radiological Controls Practices Evaluation (RCPE)
27-30 SEP	Helo deck certification
7-13 OCT	Underway, enroute Guantanamo Bay, Cuba/individual ship's exercises
14-27 OCT	Modified Refresher Training, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
27-31 OCT	Port visit, Port Everglades, FL
1-5 NOV	INSURV
4-6 NOV	Annual Supply Inspection
8-10 NOV	Nuclear Weapons Acceptance Inspection
22-23 NOV	NWAI retest
26 NOV	Underway for Site II, Rota, Spain
7 DEC	Arrive Rota, Spain

NARRATIVE 1976

Upon arrival in Charleston, South Carolina, CANOPUS began the offload in preparation for the coming yard period. The long hours and hard work would again be repeated at the end of the overhaul, but with the backload of supplies there would be "a place for everything and everything in its place". The purpose of the offload is to get the supplies out where they can be seen and inventoried. It also got the ship down to bare CANOPUS so that the real work of the overhaul could be done.

On 5 January 1976, CANOPUS began an extensive eight month regular overhaul. For eight hard dirty months, the crew of the CANOPUS would grind, sand, weld, repair and paint. Major changes of this yard period would be

a conversion to a Navy Distillate Fuel System, installation of a Sewage Treatment System, major boiler rework of tubes and refractory, overhaul of the ship's service turbine generators, and overhauls of all cranes, elevators and conveyors.

There were major overhauls of most auxiliary equipment, installation of a new 400 line automatic phone system, relocation and improvement of the ship's Site CCTV and ship's entertainment systems. And, of course, every space on the ship would be painted, retiled and improved where necessary. All of this was accomplished with the crew living off the ship, and very little in the way of conveniences or comforts on board. Most of the men lived several miles away in the barracks, with only the duty sections on board at night. No food except what was brought onboard or bought at the mobile cafaterias. It was often difficult to find water or head facilities.

All these problems were overcome with the traditional CANOPUS "CAN DO" spirit and by 28 AUG 76, the yard period was completed, one week ahead of schedule. Much habitability work was still to be done. The work to bring the ship back to its previous high standards of appearance and cleanliness continued throughout the year as the dust and dirt of the shipyard was replaced by the spit and polish of an operational naval vessel.

A cycle of inspections began at the end of the yard period. As early as June, with the Change of Command Ceremony for Captain John M. WILL, Jr., the CANOPUS was to prove her ability to favorably meet the inspection of outside authority. The major work on the engineering plant was completed in time for the mid-July inspection and certification of the new Navy Distillate Fuel System, which in turn gave the ship the power to complete other aspects of the post overhaul testing. By August 9th the general mess was reopened and the crew made preparations to move back onboard. It was time to bring CANOPUS back to life after the months on the operating tables of the Charleston Naval Shipyard.

On the 10th and 11th of August, CANOPUS undertook dock trials and fast cruise. Once her personnel were again acquainted with their seagoing duties, CANOPUS left her moor for two days of sea trials. Underway under her own power for the first time in a long while, CANOPUS successfully completed her sea trials on the 12th and 13th of August, and by the next day the crew began to move back on board. The work continued to prepare the ship for her upcoming Refresher Training and ultimately - back to her reason for being - to tend the submarines of the Fleet Ballistic Missile Force. Even before the end of the overhaul, the Supply Department was to host an Assistance Team visit to help them get off on the right foot operationally. CANOPUS also had an inspection of her O2N2 plant to make sure it would operate properly. The next day, 28 August 1976, the overhaul was officially completed.

The momentum of hard work and more inspections continued on. The Supply backload began and continued for over a month as over 2600 pallets of general stores material, 750 pallets of provisions, 250 pallets of Ship's Store and service supplies materials and great quantities of Direct Turnover Materials were delivered to the storerooms and divisions of the bustling CANOPUS. On the 1st of September, CANOPUS began an inspection for certification to handle MK 48 torpedos. This required a demonstration of expertise in weapons handling as well as having a Damage Control Team who could handle the dangerous OTTO Torpedo fuel.

September continued with two Capability and Proficiency Evaluations (CAPE) one with a FBM submarine alongside; two Radiological Control Practices Evaluations (RCPE), one by COMSUBLANT and one from CINCLANTFLT; a visit by the Food Service Assist Team in conjunction with a Laundry Service Assist Visit; a POSEIDON/ASTOR training assist; an inspection by NAVSEC of the new CHT System, the sewage treatment installation; an instrument TEMPEST inspection; and to top it all off, an inspection of the CANOPUS Helo Deck, facilities and personnel and the certification of them.

The month of October opened with an Open House the first weekend. CANOPUS was preparing for the upcoming Modified Refresher Training. Refresher Training, as dished out in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba is a grueling experience. It is designed to bring combat vessels up to a fully trained combat ready stance through intensive training under a simulated combat environment. It brings all departments of a ship into the training, with the major thrusts being the exercise of combat arms and damage control capability. For a non-combatant, such as a tender, the schedule is revised to emphasize the damage control and engineering aspects of Refresher Training (REFTRA). With typical CANOPUS "Can Do" attitude, the ship left Charleston for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on 7 October and spent the entire in-transit week exercising and practicing for her coming tests.

Once in GITMO, CANOPUS completed the modified REFTRA in a week and a half, half the time normally allotted to a ship the size of a tender. During the training period, the ship underwent extensive examination in all phases of shipboard administration and operations. Paperwork was checked and double checked, drills were held twice or more daily. During the Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE) the Gunnery division was to achieve a perfect score, a rare accomplishment for any unit, let alone a non-combatant. The comprehensive efforts of CANOPUS and the Fleet Training Group showed satisfactory or commendable scores in areas of engineering, casualty control, damage control, improvement of material condition and CIC and navigational skills.

The CANOPUS left Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on 28 October. The ship spent a long weekend in Port Everglades, Florida from the 29th to the 31st of October. The hospitability of Fort Lauderdale towards the crew was reciprocated during the open house onboard, and it proved to be a pleasure for all hands. On Monday, 1 November, the CANOPUS was underway for Charleston, South Carolina with the INSURV Board embarked. The ship arrived in Charleston on 2 November and the INSURV inspection continued through the week. CANOPUS was found fit for further service and reference was made in the final report to the obvious attention to cleanliness, preservation and maintenance aboard.

The month of November continued the cycle of inspections and hard work in preparation for the coming deployment to Site II in Rota, Spain. The Annual Supply Inspection started before the INSURV had even been completed and a week later the Nuclear Weapons Acceptance Inspection (Nwai) was scheduled. The supply inspection was passed handily, but the Nwai team perceived a let down in the crew particularly in security consciousness and another Nwai was held on 22-23 November. This inspection was taken in stride along with the preparations for deployment. There was a brief pause for Thanksgiving, then the next day, 26 November, CANOPUS was underway for her new life as resident tender at Site II.

CANOPUS arrived on Site December 7th, 1976. CANOPUS immediately fell into the rhythm of the Site, taking her place in the Med moor at the end of Pier 2, Rota, Spain. The incumbent tender, USS SIMON LAKE (AS-33) was engaged in preparations for a Propulsion Examining Board (PEB) necessitating that CANOPUS start taking over duties as resident tender on the first day. CANOPUS assumed the entire Site II communications guard the day of arrival, including that of the SIMON LAKE with no "break-in" period and provided full operational capability in an absolute minimum of time. The Repair Department assumed duties in the upkeep of the submarines present. As we reached towards a new year, the momentum CANOPUS has picked up by entering her new duties "on the run" promise to show in the achievements to come.