

been a recurring theme for NEW ORLEANS, as evidenced by her many humanitarian accomplishments. In 1971, she provided extensive assistance to the residents of Palnuan City on Mindoro Island, Republic of the Philippines. Marines from the embarked Battalion Landing Team built water storage tanks while medical personnel treated over 800 villagers for conditions ranging from intestinal parasites to tuberculosis. Dental care was also provided. One of the ship's portable generators was used to show 2,000 villagers their first movie. A year later, NEW ORLEANS returned to the Philippines to provide flood relief. In 1989, while in transit to Mazatlan, Mexico, she was diverted to Cabo San Lucas to render assistance after a propane explosion destroyed a large section of the city. Most notably, NEW ORLEANS deployed in September 1993 in support of OPERATIONS RESTORE HOPE and UNOSOM II off the coast of Mogadishu, Somalia.

NEW ORLEANS amassed an impressive record of search and rescue achievements, starting with her very first Navy helicopter landing underway. A UH-2 flew from Naval Air Station, Lakehurst, New Jersey to evacuate a seriously ill shipyard worker to a hospital ashore during machinery trials a few days after her commissioning. NEW ORLEANS entered the record books for the longest MEDEVAC (775 nautical miles) when a crew member injured his head in an accident and two Air Force H-53s flew 7 hours and 43 minutes from Hawaii to reach the ship and take him to a hospital.

The ship operated her own organic search and rescue helicopter (call sign "CAJUN") until August 1992. First an H-46 Sea Knight, it was later replaced by an H-1 Huey. NEW ORLEANS performed many MEDEVACs and rescues utilizing both "CAJUN" and embarked Navy and Marine Corps helicopters. Beneficiaries of these services included personnel from NEW ORLEANS, other United States Ships, Norwegian merchants, Australian Navy ships, and civilian fishing and sailing vessels. In addition, NEW

ORLEANS' helicopters have rescued pilots from F-4, H-53, and AV-8 aircraft, as well as space vehicles.

NEW ORLEANS began her space career on February 9, 1971, when she recovered the Apollo 14 command module and astronauts Alan Shepard, Stuart Roosa, and Ed Mitchell 900 miles south of American Samoa in the South Pacific. On September 25, 1973, she recovered the Skylab III command module and astronauts Alan Bean, Owen Garriott, and Jack Lousma 190 miles southwest of San Diego. On February 8, 1974, NEW ORLEANS recovered the Skylab IV command module and astronauts Jerry Carr, Ed Gibson, and Bill Pogue 250 miles southwest of San Diego. Finally, on July 5, 1975, she recovered the Apollo/Soyuz Test Project command module and astronauts Thomas Stafford, Donald Slayton, and Vance Brand.

Aviation testing was another arena in which NEW ORLEANS excelled. Her accomplishments included the first landing of an AV-8A HARRIER on an LPH class ship in the Pacific, followed by the first underway operations of the "Jump Jet." The first UAV operations from an LPH were conducted onboard NEW ORLEANS. She performed dynamic interface testing for several rotary wing platforms, and operated many experimental aircraft complements utilizing Navy, Marine, Army, Air Force, and Special Operations assets. Additionally, a number of foreign and civilian aircraft have landed on her flight deck.

A world-class hostess, NEW ORLEANS

#### The Second Battle of New Orleans

The City of New Orleans played a major role in American Civil War history. Admiral David Farragut's fleet passed the forts guarding New Orleans on April 24, 1862, sealing the fate of the Confederacy. New Orleans fell to the Union fleet two days later, assuring that the United States would not be divided. The delta of the Mississippi was open to the Union assault force, which joined the Union forces coming south in the great pincer which severed the Confederacy. "Thus," reported Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, "the great southern depot of the trade of the immense central emporium of the wealthy region was restored to national authority; the mouth of the Mississippi was under our control and an outlet for the great west to the ocean was secured."