



USCS DATA SHEET #2C  
 OPERATION CROSSROADS  
 (Atomic Bomb Tests At Bikini Atoll - 1946)  
 Revised: 24 June 2012  
 By Mike R. Vining (USCS #10433)

In July 1946, the United States conducted two weapons effects test of the atomic bomb in the South Pacific's Marshall Islands, involving 167 support vessels. The test was publicized to the world as a scientific demonstration versus a military test. On 1 July, the first bomb "Able Test" was detonated in the air over a target fleet of 93 vessels anchored in the lagoon of Bikini Atoll. On 25 July, an underwater burst "Baker Test" was detonated in the lagoon against 90 vessels. A total of 95 vessels were used as target ships. The operation was carried out by Joint Army-Navy Task Force One (JTF-1), under the command of Vice Admiral William Henry Purnell "Spike" Blandy, USN.

Joint Task Force One  
Support Group  
 Mount McKinley (AGC-7) Flagship

Achomawi (ATF-148) <i>NTPS</i>	Coasters Harbor (AG-74)	James M. Gillis (AGS-13) <i>NTPS</i>
Ajax (AR-6)	Conserver (ARS-39)	John Blish (ASG-10) <i>NTPS</i>
Albemarle (AV-5)	Cortland (APA-75) <i>NTPS</i>	
Allen M. Sumner (DD-692)	Coucal (ASR-8) <i>NTPS</i>	Kenneth Whiting (AV-14)
Appalachian (AGC-1)	Creon (ARL-11) <i>NTPS</i>	
Appling (APA-58) <i>NTPS</i>	Cumberland Sound (AV-17)*	Laffey (DD-724)
Artemis (AKA-21) <i>NTPS</i>	Current (ARS-22)	Limestone (IX-158) <i>NTPS</i>
Aucilla (AO-56)		Lowrey (DD-770)
Avery Island (AG-76)	Deliver (ARS-23) <i>NTPS</i>	
	Dixie (AD-14)	Mender (ARSD-2) <i>NTPS</i>
Barton (DD-722)		Moale (DD-693)
Bayfield (APA-33)	Enoree (AO-69)	Munsee (ATF-107)
Begor (APD-127) <i>NTPS</i>	Etlah (AN-79) <i>NTPS</i>	
Benevolence (AH-13)		Newman K. Perry (DD-833)
Bexar (APA-237)	Fall River (CA-131)	
Blue Ridge (AGC-2)	Flusser (DD-368) <i>NTPS</i>	O'Brien (DD-725)
Bottineau (APA-235)	Fulton (AS-11)	Oneota (AN-85) <i>NTPS</i>
Bountiful (AH-9)	Furse (DD-882)	Orca (AVP-49)
Bowditch (AGS-4)		Ottawa (AKA-101)
Burleson (APA-67)	George Clymer (APA-27)	
	Gunston Hall (LSD-5)	Palmyra (ARS(T)-3)
Cebu (ARG-6)	Gypsy (ARSD-1) <i>NTPS</i>	Panamint (AGC-13)
Charles P. Cecil (DD-835)		Phaon (ARB-3)
Chickasaw (AT-83) <i>NTPS</i>	Haven (AH-12)	Pollux (AKS-4)
Chickaskia (AO-54) <i>NTPS</i>	Henrico (APA-45)	Preserver (ARS-8) <i>NTPS</i>
Chilton (APA-38)	Hesperia (AKS-13)	Presque Isle (APB-44)
Chowanoc (AT-100)		
Clamp (ARS-33)	Ingraham (DD-694)	Quartz (IX-150) <i>NTPS</i>

OPERATION CROSSROADS  
Additional Support Group

Reclaimer (ARS-42) <i>NTPS</i>	ARD-29 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-881 <i>NTPS</i>
Robert K. Huntington (DD-781)		LST-989 <i>NTPS</i>
Rockbridge (APA-228)	LCI-329 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-1108
Rockingham (APA-229)	LCI (L)-549 <i>NTPS</i>	
Rockwall (APA-230)	LCI(L)-615 <i>NTPS</i>	PGM-23 <i>NTPS</i>
Rolette (AKA-99)	LCI(L)-977 <i>NTPS</i>	PGM-24 <i>NTPS</i>
	LCI9L)-1061 <i>NTPS</i>	PGM-25 <i>NTPS</i>
Saidor (CVE-117)	LCI(L)-1062 <i>NTPS</i>	PGM-29 <i>NTPS</i>
Saint Croix (APA-231)	LCI(L)-1067 <i>NTPS</i>	PGM-31 <i>NTPS</i>
San Marcos (LSD-25)	LCI(L)-1090 <i>NTPS</i>	PGM-32 <i>NTPS</i>
Severn (AO-61)	LCI(L)-1091 <i>NTPS</i>	
Shakamaxon (AN-88) <i>NTPS</i>	LCI(L)-1092 <i>NTPS</i>	YC-1009 <i>NTPS</i>
Shangri-La (CV-38)	LCI-1361 <i>NTPS</i>	
Sioux (ATF-75) <i>NTPS</i>	LCI-1461 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-385 <i>NTPS</i>
Sphinx (ARL-24)		YF-733 <i>NTPS</i>
Sumner (AGS-5)	LCT-52 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-734 <i>NTPS</i>
Suncock (AN-80) <i>NTPS</i>	LCT-581 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-735 <i>NTPS</i>
	LCT-746 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-752 <i>NTPS</i>
Telamon (ARB-8)	LCT-1116 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-753 <i>NTPS</i>
Tolovana (AO-64)	LCT-1130 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-754 <i>NTPS</i>
Tombigbee (AOG-11)	LCT-1132 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-990 <i>NTPS</i>
Turner (DD-834)	LCT-1184 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-991 <i>NTPS</i>
	LCT-1268 <i>NTPS</i>	YF-992 <i>NTPS</i>
Walke (DD-723)	LCT-1341 <i>NTPS</i>	
Wenatchee (ATF) <i>NTPS</i>	LCT-1155 <i>NTPS</i>	YMS-354 <i>NTPS</i>
Wharton (AP-7)	LCT-1359 <i>NTPS</i>	YMS-358 <i>NTPS</i>
Widgeon (ASR-1) <i>NTPS</i>	LCT-1361 <i>NTPS</i>	YMS-413 <i>NTPS</i>
Wild Cat (AW-2)	LCT-1377 <i>NTPS</i>	
	LCT-1415 <i>NTPS</i>	YO-132 <i>NTPS</i>
APL-27 <i>NTPS</i>	LCT-1420 <i>NTPS</i>	YO-199 <i>NTPS</i>
	LCT-1461 <i>NTPS</i>	
ATA-124 <i>NTPS</i>		YOG-63 <i>NTPS</i>
ATA-135 <i>NTPS</i>	LCT(6)-1359 <i>NTPS</i>	YOG-70 <i>NTPS</i>
ATA-180 <i>NTPS</i>	LCT(6)-1361 <i>NTPS</i>	
ATA-185 <i>NTPS</i>		YP-636 <i>NTPS</i>
ATA-187 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-388 <i>NTPS</i>	
ATA-192 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-817 <i>NTPS</i>	YW-92 <i>NTPS</i>
ATR-40 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-861=	
ATR-87 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-871 <i>NTPS</i>	

OPERATION CROSSROADS

Target Group

Anderson (DD-411) <i>SKA</i>	Parche (SS-384) <i>NTPS</i>	LCT-818 <i>NTPS</i>
Apogon (SS-308) <i>SKB NTPS</i>	Pennsylvania (BB-38)	LCT-874 <i>NTPS</i>
Arkansas (BB-33) <i>SKB</i>	Pensacola (CA-24)	LCT-1013 <i>NTPS</i>
	Pilotfish (SS-386) <i>SKB NTPS</i>	LCT-1078 <i>NTPS</i>
Banner (APA-60)		LCT-1112 <i>NTPS</i>
Barrow (APA-61)	Ralph Talbot (DD-390) <i>NTPS</i>	LCT-1113 <i>NTPS</i>
Bladen (APA-63)	Rhind (DD-404)	LCT-1114+ <i>SKB NTPS</i>
Bracken (APA-64)		LCT-1115+ <i>NTPS</i>
Briscoe (APA-65)	Salt Lake City (CA-25)	LCT-1175 <i>SKB NTPS</i>
Brule (APA-66)	Saratoga (CV-3) <i>SKB</i>	LCT-1187 <i>SKB NTPS</i>
Butte (APA-68)	Searaven (SS-196) <i>NTPS</i>	LCT-1237 <i>SKB NTPS</i>
	Skate (SS-305) <i>NTPS</i>	
Carlisle (APA-69) <i>SKA</i>	Skipjack (SS-184) <i>SKB NTPS</i>	LCVP-7 <i>NTPS</i>
Carteret (APA-70)	Stack (DD-406)	LCVP-8 <i>NTPS</i>
Catron (APA-71)		LCVP-9 <i>NTPS</i>
Conyngham (DD-371)	Trippe (DD-403)	LCVP-10 <i>SKB NTPS</i>
Cortland (APA-75)	Tuna (SS-203) <i>NTPS</i>	LCVP-11 <i>NTPS</i>
Crittenden (APA-77)		LCVP12 <i>NTPS</i>
	Wainwright (DD-419)	
Dawson (DD-79)	Wilson (DD-408)	LSM-60 <sup>^</sup> <i>SKB NTPS</i>
Dentuda (SS-335) <i>NTPS</i>		
	ARDC-13 <i>SKB NTPS</i>	LST-52 <i>NTPS</i>
Fallon (APA-81)		LST-125 <i>SKB NTPS</i>
Fillmore (APA-83)	LCI-327 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-133 <i>NTPS</i>
	LCI 329 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-220 <i>NTPS</i>
Gasconade (APA-85)	LCI-332 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-545 <i>NTPS</i>
Geneva (APA-86) <i>SKA</i>	LCI(L)-549 <i>NTPS</i>	LST-661 <i>NTPS</i>
Gilliam (APA-57)	LCI(L)-615 <i>NTPS</i>	
	LCI-620 <i>NTPS</i>	YO-160 <i>SKB NTPS</i>
Hughes (DD-410) <i>NTPS</i>		
	LCM-1 <i>NTPS</i>	YOG-83 <i>NTPS</i>
Independence (CVL-22)	LCM-2 <i>NTPS</i>	
	LCM-3 <i>NTPS</i>	Prinz Eugen IX-300
Lamson (DD-367) <i>SKA</i>	LCM-4 <i>SKB NTPS</i>	German Battle Cruiser
	LCM-5 <i>NTPS</i>	
Mayrant (DD-402)	LCM-6 <i>NTPS</i>	Nagato <i>SKB NTPS</i>
Mugford (DD-389) <i>NTPS</i>		Japanese Battleship
Mustin (DD-413) <i>NTPS</i>	LCT-412+ <i>NTPS</i>	
	LCT-414 <i>SKB NTPS</i>	Sakawa <i>NTPS</i>
Nevada (BB-36)	LCT-705 <i>NTPS</i>	Japanese Cruiser
New York (BB-34)	LCT-812 <i>SKB NTPS</i>	
Niagara (APA-87)	LCT-816 <i>NTPS</i>	

*NTPS* – No Test Postal Service  
 + Added for Baker Test  
 = U.S. Navy Fleet Post Office

\* Firing ship for Baker Test  
*SKA* – Sunk, Able Test

<sup>^</sup> – Bomb Carrier, Baker Test  
*SKB* – Sunk, Baker Test

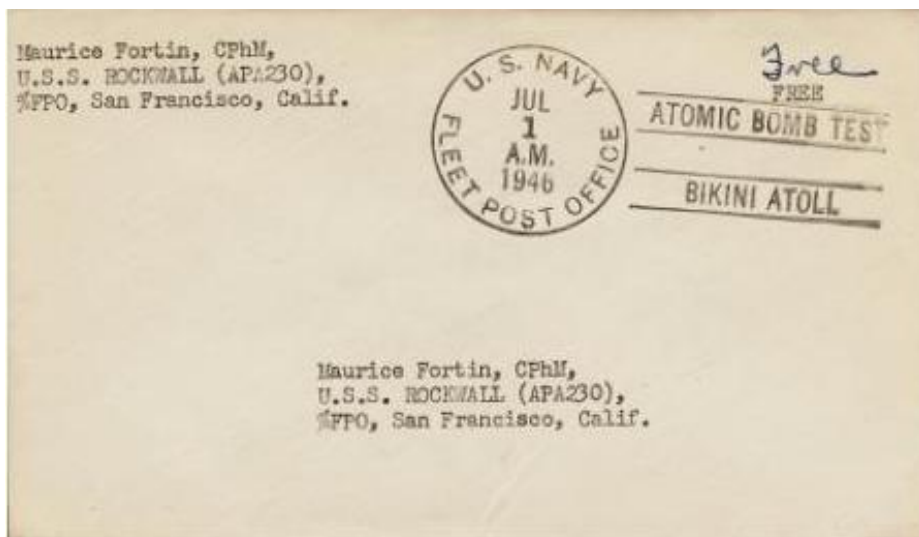
OPERATION CROSSROADS  
Postmarks

Three post offices were available during Operation CROSSROADS, besides the ships that had their own operating post offices. The JTF-1 used a Type 2 # Fleet Post Office (FPO), Navy Brach Number 13746, which was active from 1 October 1945 to 2 September 1946. This mobile post office was located aboard support ship LST-861.



LST-861, FPO 13746.

A special cancellation was applied to 200,000 pieces of mail on 1 July 1946, with the killer bars reading "ATOMIC BOMB TEST/BIKINI ATOLL." All covers with this postmark were mailed from LST-861 regardless of what the return address or cachet indicates. The U.S. Post Office Department provided the canceling device for the event. A T-7qz(2) machine cancel was also used aboard the LST-861 during Operation CROSSROADS.



LST-861, special 1 July 1946 slogan cancel.



LST-861, T-7qz(2) machine cancel.

Army Post Office (APO) 22212 SF was also used by JTF-1 according to its needs in support of the nuclear tests at Operation CROSSROADS and was used with later nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands. Additionally, Navy Number USN - SF 3078 was also assigned to Bikini Atoll.



USS DAWSON (APA-79), Type P (D-6) slogan cancel.



USS KENNETH WHITING (AV-14), 1 July 1946 slogan postmark.

According to my research on Operation CROSSROADS, it would be possible to obtain postmarks from 70 out of 167 support ships and 38 out of 95 target vessels during the time period 6 February to 26 September 1946, that were in the waters of northern Marshall Islands. This figure includes the reported continual use of cancellation devices after the ships last day of postal service. One source stated that covers were sent to 140 ships with returns from 120 ships.

#### References:

1. Operation CROSSROADS – Japan, Parts 1 & 2, by Mike R. Vining, *USCS LOG*, April and May 2006.
2. Operation CROSSROADS – Able Test, Parts 1- 3, by Mike R. Vining, *USCS LOG*, June, July, and August 2006.
3. Operation CROSSROADS – Covers of 1946, by Frank M. Hoak III, *USCS LOG*, October 2006.
4. Operation CROSSROADS – Baker Test, Parts 1-3, by Mike R. Vining, *USCS LOG*, November, December 2006, and January 2007.
5. Naval Cover Fake, Forgeries and Frauds, Part XIII, by David A. Kent, *USCS LOG*, February 2009.
6. Operation Crossroads – The Atomic Tests at Bikini Atoll, by Jonathan M. Weisgall, 1994, published by the Naval Institute Press.

Data Sheet #2C was originally written by USS NATHAN HALE Chapter 68.

Send any corrections to Mike R. Vining, 635 Blackhawk Road, South Fork, CO 81154-9609, Email: [sgmmvining@gmail.com](mailto:sgmmvining@gmail.com)