

**Nomination for USS BATON ROUGE (SSN-689) as 2019 Hall of Fame Boat
Hampton Roads Base U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc.**

USS Baton Rouge (SSN-689) was a Los Angeles-class nuclear-powered attack submarine which served with the United States Navy. With her keel laid down on 18 November 1972, Baton Rouge was launched on 26 April 1975. She became the second Los Angeles-class submarine to be commissioned, on 25 June 1977. Baton Rouge was the first and currently only ship of the United States Navy to be named for Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Baton Rouge was a nuclear attack submarine and, as such, was optimized for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and strike operations. To this end, she was certified to carry a complement of weapons, including the Mark 48 ADCAP torpedo – the main weapon of U.S. Navy submarines, Harpoon anti-ship missiles, SUBROC and Tomahawk cruise missiles. Baton Rouge was also able to lay Mobile Mark 67 and Mark 60 CAPTOR mines.

The boat's propulsion system comprised a S6G pressurized-water reactor based on the D2G reactor of the Bainbridge and Truxton classes of cruiser. Heat produced from the S6G reactor converted water into steam, powering turbines, and thus the propeller shaft.

A crucial component in Baton Rouge's ability to perform its mission were its comprehensive defensive, navigational and sonar systems. Among her several sonar sets were the TB-23/29 thin line passive towed array sonar, the BQS 15 close range high frequency active sonar and the SADS-TG active detection sonar. These systems collaborated to give Baton Rouge good situational awareness. The boat's electronic support measures included a direction finding system, interceptor and a radar warner.

Construction and commissioning

The contract to build Baton Rouge was awarded to Newport News Shipbuilding of Newport News, Virginia, on 8 January 1971, and her keel was laid down on 18 November 1972. Launched on 26 April 1975 in the presence of sponsor Mrs. Felix Edward Hebert, wife of the United States Representative from the First District and the former Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Baton Rouge was commissioned on 25 June 1977, with Commander Thomas C. Maloney as her first captain.

Based at Norfolk and assigned to Submarine Squadron 8, Baton Rouge's immediate history following the commissioning was characterized by shakedown training in New London, Connecticut, among other tests. During 5–29 July, she performed drills off the New England coast, returning to Norfolk for a month-long post-shakedown upkeep. From September 1977 to August 1978, she participated in numerous other tests, such as acoustic trials in Exuma Sound, The Bahamas, and weapons tests off Port Everglades, Florida. During this time, she returned periodically to Norfolk, and docked alongside USS L. Y. Spear, for upkeep, the longest of which spanned from February to August.

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Operational history

In preparations for her first overseas assignment, Baton Rouge was deployed to New London in September for training before returning to Norfolk for last-minute checks prior to the deployment. She left port on 19 October 1978, and raised her first port of call in La Maddalena, Sardinia, on 1 November. Baton Rouge also visited La Spezia and took part in a variety of ASW exercises through the winter of 1978 and 1979.

The submarine returned to Norfolk from her first overseas assignment in March 1979. After post-deployment stand-down, Baton Rouge resumed normal operations later that year. These included participation in two major ASW exercises and visits to such widely-separated places as Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and Halifax, Nova Scotia. In July, she was assigned to Submarine Squadron 8 and continued to use Norfolk as her base of operations. During September–October, Baton Rouge participated in a major NATO exercise – Operation Ocean Safari – which took her across the Atlantic once more and included a call at Rotterdam, the Netherlands. She returned to Norfolk from that mission during the latter part of October and spent the remainder of 1979 in a restricted availability.

In 1980, she was deployed to the Indian Ocean and circumnavigated the earth, passing through the International Date Line and the Panama Canal. For the deployment, she was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation when she arrived in Norfolk. As was the case in the Indian Pacific in 1980, in 1981 Baton Rouge again came under the command of Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet (CINCLANTFLT), after which she received the Meritorious Unit Commendation. For the third time, Baton Rouge came under the command of CINCPACFLT when she made her second deployment to the Mediterranean Sea. In the mid-1980s, the boat underwent an eighteen-month overhaul at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. The overhaul, which ended in spring 1986, saw the addition to Baton Rouge the AN/BQQ-5C sonar system, the CCS Mk-1 digital fire-control system, and the ESGN navigation system. She made her third deployment to the Mediterranean in November, and her fourth in January 1990. Between these two assignments, Baton Rouge conducted a deployment to the North Atlantic, and was awarded her second Meritorious Unit Commendation.

Decommissioning

On 13 January 1995, she became the first Los Angeles-class submarine to be decommissioned and stricken from the Naval Vessel Register, after 17½ years in commission. Ex-Baton Rouge entered the Nuclear Powered Ship-Submarine Recycling Program and ceased to exist on 30 September 1997.