



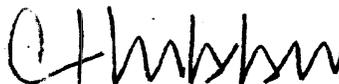
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS DENVER (LPD-9)
FPO AP 96663-1712

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From: Commanding Officer, USS DENVER (LPD 9)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Washington Navy Yard, Washington D.C.
Subj: SUBMISSION OF COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS DENVER (LPD 9) CY 1998
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F
Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Commanding Officer Biography
(5) Photo of Commanding Officer
(6) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet for Visitors
(7) 3-1/2" Disk

1. Per reference (a), the following is forwarded as the history of *USS Denver* (LPD 9) for calendar year 1998.
2. *USS Denver* (LPD 9) is the third United States Navy ship to bear the name of American pioneer James William Denver and the capital of the state of Colorado. *Denver's* primary mission is to provide an aviation and assault craft launch and recovery platform in support of amphibious assault operations. Secondary missions include providing logistical support for amphibious assault operations, humanitarian relief, and training of helicopter pilots, Marines, special warfare personnel, reservists, and midshipmen.
3. The following major personnel changes occurred over the last year: CAPT C. F. Webber relieved the Commanding Officer, CAPT D.K. Dupouy. LCDR J. Arleth relieved the Executive Officer, LCDR R. Appollo. LT W. Middleton relieved the Chaplain LT M. Hogg. LT J. Midgett relieved the Chief Engineer, LCDR J. Shirley. CWO4 C. Gundlefinger relieved the Damage Control Assistant, LT R. Beltejar. LT P. Lacore relieved the Air Boss, LT J. Massello. LT J. Van Gorp relieved the Supply Officer, LT D. Kao. CWO4 W. Dougherty relieved the Ship's Bos'n, CWO2 V. Cantley. LTJG C. Zakhem relieved the Navigator, LTJG E. Conzen and LT W. Rosana subsequently relieved LTJG Zakhem. ENS G. Clark relieved the Third Division Officer, LTJG N. Straub, LT D. Deanes, Jr. relieved the Operations Officer, LCDR B. Espe. LTJG J. Nigh relieved the CIC Officer, LT B. Newcomer.


C. F. WEBBER

Command Composition and Organization

Commanding Officer

Captain Webber

Executive Department

Executive Officer

LCDR Arleth

Chaplain
LT Middleton

Navigator / Admin Officer
LT Rosana

Medical
LT Favata

Dental
LT Osborn

Engineering Department

Chief Engineer

LT Midgett

Main Propulsion Assistant

LTJG Kim

Damage Control Assistant

CWO4 Gundelfinger

Aux Division
LTJG Forester

M Division
ENS Grant

B Division
ENS Tawney

E Division
LTJG Kim

R Division
LTJG Drew

Deck Department

First Lieutenant

LT Mason

Combat Cargo
CWO2 Sharp

Ship's Bos'n
CWO4 Dougherty

1st Division
ENS Nelson

2nd Division
ENS Leonas

3rd Division
ENS Straub

Enclosure (1)

Operations Department

Operations Officer

LT Deanes

CIC Officer

LT Nigh

Communications Officer

CW02 Stephens

EMO

ENS Stephens

Supply Department

Supply Officer

LT Van Gorp

Disbursing / Sales Officer

ENS Beltz

Food Service Officer

ENS Barakat

Air Department

Air Officer

LT Lacore

A/C Fuels Officer

LT Camarata

Chronology Calendar Year 1998

January

01 - 06 Inport San Diego, Holiday Leave Period
07-31 POM

February

01 - 06 POM
07 - 28 Underway enroute to Arabian Gulf
27 Chop C7F

March

01 - 09 Underway Indian Ocean enroute Arabian Gulf
07 Chop C5F
10 Underway, Strait of Hormuz transit
11 Transit to Bahrain
12-17 Inport Bahrain
18-21 Underway North Arabian Gulf
22-31 OPS Inport Kuwait

April

01-16 OPS Inport Kuwait
17 Enroute Qatar
18-24 Exercise Eastern Maverick
25-30 Inport Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates

May

01 - 02 Inport Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates
03 - 05 Underway, Strait of Hormuz transit
06-07 Anchored Mitsawa, Eretria, Exercise Epic Mantle
08-13 Underway Transit Red Sea
14-25 Inport Aqaba, Jordan, Offload for Exercise Infinite Moonlight
26-27 Underway Red Sea
28-31 Inport Aqaba, Jordan, Backload from Exercise Infinite Moonlight

June

01-06 Inport Aqaba, Jordan, Backload from Exercise Infinite Moonlight
07-17 Underway Red Sea
18-27 Transit Indian Ocean
23 Chop C7F
28-30 Inport Phuket, Thailand

July

01 Inport Phuket, Thailand
01 Transit Straits of Mallaca
03-05 Inport Singapore
06-09 Transit to Hong Kong
10-14 Inport Hong Kong
15-26 Transit to Hawaii
25 Chop C3F
27-30 Inport Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
31 Tiger Cruise, Transit to San Diego, CA

August

01-05 Tiger Cruise, Transit to San Diego, CA
06 Camp Pendleton Offload
07 Arrive San Diego, CA
08-31 POM

September

01-06 POM
07 Labor Day
08 Underway, transit to Seal Beach
09-10 Inport Seal Beach, CA / Ammo Off-load
11 Underway, transit to San Diego
12-17 Upkeep and Training
18 Change of Command
19-29 Upkeep and Training
30 PMA at Southwest Marine Shipyard

October

01-31 PMA

November

01 - 30 PMA

December

01 PMA
02-03 Sea Trials
04-14 Upkeep and Training
15-17 Type Training, SOCAL
18-31 Holiday Leave Period

1998 Narrative

1 January 1998, *Denver* was pierside in San Diego, CA. finishing up a holiday leave and upkeep period. The remainder of the January and the first week in February was a Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) period.

Denver, *USS Tarawa* (LHA 1) and *USS Mount Vernon* (LSD 39) left their San Diego homeport Feb. 7th, five days earlier than scheduled, and steamed more than 12,000 nautical miles to the Arabian Gulf, without a port visit, in order to relieve the *USS Guam* (LPH 9) Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG) and continue the commitment to security and stability in the region. Sailors and Marines who had already worked without respite during the transoceanic voyage, said readiness would remain foremost in their minds now that they were on station in the gulf.

After a high-speed 30-day dash half-way around the world, *Denver*, part of the *Tarawa* ARG, and 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), Special Operations Capable (SOC), arrived in the Arabian Gulf March 11th. With challenges facing them and challenges already overcome during the transit, *Denver* Sailors and Marines enjoyed a port visit 12-15 March, stopping in Bahrain for shopping, sightseeing, and relaxing. After leaving Bahrain, on 16 March, the ARG renewed their Arabian Gulf patrol.

From 17 March to 15 April, *Denver* was in Kuwait conducting operations with Kuwait Military forces. On April 15th, the outstanding efforts of *Denver's* crew members, Chief Petty Officers and officers to plan, coordinate and execute a five star reception established a standard that will be hard to surpass. Over 200 ambassadors, foreign dignitaries, military officers, and guests alike, were totally impressed by our preparations, hospitality and culinary expertise.

Commodore Stevens, Commander, Amphibious Squadron THREE, and Colonel Moore, Commander, Eleventh MEU (SOC), hosted the Honorable Mr. Larocco, U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait, onboard *Denver*. During his speech, the Ambassador once again stated the importance of our being here. "After the agreement with the Iraqis was obtained, diplomacy is fine, but diplomacy backed by firmness and force is much better. Well, you put a good deal of the 'oomph' in the force. With your three ships, almost 4,000 Marines and Sailors, and over a score of aircraft, you were the right unit at the right time in the right place. Such a flexible force undoubtedly helped the Iraqis see the handwriting on the wall." The Ambassador cited this spectacular representational event as an extremely appropriate sendoff for a continuous successful deployment for the *Tarawa* ARG and 11th MEU (SOC).

In mid-April, *Denver* departed Kuwait and participated in exercise "Eastern Maverick" 18-24 April with the military forces of Qatar. Day-to-day operations included simultaneous flight operations and amphibious landing craft operations, and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) reconnaissance flights. Upon completion of these amphibious landings, *Denver's* crew enjoyed a port visit in Jebel Ali, 25 April through 03 May, and nearby Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Shopping, dining, and tour excursions gave everyone a well deserved break from the high-tension periods of normal Arabian Gulf operations.

Denver made its way out of the Arabian Gulf on 05 May, after conducting several, very successful, bilateral training exercises with various Gulf nations. We transited around the Arabian Peninsula to the Red Sea and headed north to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Pierside in Aqaba from 28 May through 08 June, Jordan allowed the crew to enjoy great shopping and sightseeing. The magnificent ruins of Petra are quite a sight. Hopefully, our photos and tales will be enough to describe the age-old beauty and mystique of this historic site. Others tested their walking-on-water skills in the salty Dead Sea. The density of the water is such, that floating is effortless. The Red Sea is also a popular recreation spot. Great underwater visibility made snorkeling and scuba diving very attractive, and the beach front hotels provided a hospitable atmosphere.

However, not all was fun in the sun. Our embarked Marines spent several weeks out in the hot, dusty desert conducting training exercises with the Royal Jordanian military forces. Sailors hosted several groups of Royal Jordanian Naval personnel to conduct training in all aspects of shipboard specialties. The offload and back-load of Marine personnel and equipment in itself is quite a monumental task, and the efforts of our Deck, Engineering, and Air Department Sailors made it all happen smoothly. Our Combat Cargo crew was also hard at work making sure the troop and cargo movements were executed on time and in proper sequence. As always, force protection remained an important issue. Security matters are a serious part of what we do, and we can never let our guard down.

Expecting to remain pierside in Aqaba, Jordan just a little longer, *Denver* was unexpectedly called to provide support for Operation Safe Departure. The Marines participating in exercise "Infinite Moonlight," were recalled early, as they rapidly back-loaded their equipment and personnel onboard. An early underway and a quick transit of the Red Sea found us on station off the coast of Eritrea for possible further evacuations of the US Marine security detachment who stayed behind at the US Embassy in Asmara during the recent conflict. We remained off the coast for nearly a week, standing by to answer the call for help.

At the same time, *Denver* successfully completed an intense engineering Mid-Cycle Assessment (MCA). This event required the total participation and involvement of our engineers. In all areas, operational checks, casualty control procedures, and materiel inspections, *Denver* received outstanding final results. Their hard work and motivation proved that our engineers are the best.

As *Denver* exited the Red Sea, and sailed past the coast of Djibouti, Eastern Africa, we received a distress call from a merchant vessel with a sick crewmember onboard. We sped to their location, and our medical team, led by LT Mike Favata, was able to provide a medical diagnosis and preliminary treatment. Assistance to those in distress is a sacrosanct tradition of sailors at sea.

We finished up the month, with a well deserved port visit to Phuket, Thailand. Located in the Andaman Sea, this resort island featured tropical beaches, exotic foods, and more opportunities to find that perfect gift for our loved ones back home. We had an unplanned stop for two days in Singapore to celebrate the 4th of July with American citizens living there. That was followed by several days in Hong Kong. Capitalism is alive and well in Chinese Hong

Kong. And now we have begun our journey home. The sun is setting behind us every evening, which confirms that we are heading east and are on our final stretch. Our time in the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea was highly productive and performed with the style and professionalism that has become the norm for our Battle "E" winning *Denver* crew.

On the Eastern Pacific transit, the ARG pulled into Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. "Tigers" embarked and enjoyed many activities and special events: Steel beach, static displays, ship maneuvering drills, live weapons firings, tours, and ARG air power demo, just to name a few. On 6 AUG, *Denver* arrived off the coast of Camp Pendleton, quickly conducting its offload. Finally, on 07 August *Denver* returned to her homeport. A post deployment leave and upkeep period commenced immediately.

After returning from deployment in August, everyone got some well-earned rest. After Labor Day weekend, however, it was right back to work as *Denver* got underway for Seal Beach. After a quick transit north, *Denver* pulled in at the weapons depot and began to offload over 200,000 pounds of ammunition. Thanks to the hard work of the gunner's mates, fire controlmen, boatswain's mates and engineers involved in the evolution, we completed the offload safely and quickly, departing Seal Beach one day earlier than expected.

On September 18th, *Denver* and her crew bid farewell to Captain Dupouy, welcoming aboard Captain Charles F. Webber as her newest Commanding Officer. Rear Admiral Brewer, Commander, Amphibious Group THREE, spoke at the ceremony. He praised the crew and Captain Dupouy for the hard work completed during the most recent deployment, and he spoke briefly about the growing role of amphibious warfare in our National Security Strategy.

Denver dead-stick moved to Southwest Marine shipyard on the 30th to begin a Phased Maintenance Availability (PMA). The next three months were to be filled with long hours of back-breaking labor for all concerned, as a tremendous amount of effort and dollars were poured into the ship. Some of the more significant jobs to be completed while at Southwest Marine included the installation of an additional air conditioning plant, the overhaul of two berthing compartments and the upgrade of *Denver's* fire pumps.

While in the shipyards, Sailors no longer resided on board. The crew has moved into the barracks at the Naval Training Center, and the duty section lived in a berthing barge outboard of *Denver*. Each crewmember had their own bed and locker, just like on the ship, and all meals were prepared and served on the barge.

The berthing barge provided most of the services that were available on the ship. The ship's store, post office, barbershop and medical ward have all moved to the barge. *Denver's* dental team had been given space at the 32nd St. Naval Station, where they continued to examine Sailors regularly.

Although much of the work was designed to improve crew comfort and enhance quality of life aboard *Denver*, the industrial environment of the shipyard took some getting used to. Jackhammers, ventilation blowers, grinders and various other equipment could be heard around the clock. Hard hats and safety glasses were required gear for all hands. Many Sailors were attending schools, and fire drills were held each Thursday afternoon to keep proficiency high in important skill areas. *Denver* was settling in for the time being, but everyone was already preparing to get back underway.

During October, November and December, much of *Denver's* equipment went through major overhauls, replacements, deletions, and additions. Nevertheless, *Denver's* crew remained ready by maintaining high levels of professional in-rate and damage control readiness. Training was held daily, safety stand-downs were held periodically, and the physical readiness test was given.

Denver exited the shipyards on 02 December and completed two days of sea trials, spent 04-14 inport for upkeep and training, then was underway again 15-17 for Type Training in the SOCAL Op Area.

The year was coming to an end. *Denver* accomplished much this year, and now it was time for the Holiday Leave Period 18-31 December. 1998 came to a close with the crew enjoying the festive spirit.