



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

Rec'd 8/16/02
W/odruk
5750
Ser 00021
28 FEB 02

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 2001
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G
Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Biography and Photo of Commanding Officer
(5) Biography of Executive Officer
(6) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet for Visitors
(7) MSG DTG 211600Z SEP 01: QUICKLOOK REPORT FOR USS DENVER (LPD 9)
MATERIAL INSPECTION
(8) 3¼" Disk

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following is forwarded as the history of USS DENVER (LPD 9) for calendar year 2001.
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 amphibious launch and recovery platform in support of amphibious assault operations. Secondary missions include providing logistical support for amphibious assault operations, humanitarian relief, and the training of helicopter pilots, Marines, special warfare personnel, reservists, and midshipmen.
3. The following major personnel changes occurred over the last year: The Executive Officer, CDR T. Klipp, was relieved by LCDR M. Lechner. The Air Officer, LT T. Yackle, was relieved by LCDR E. Balaton. The Chaplain, LT W. Middleton, was relieved by LT J. Owen. The Dental Officer, LT R. Winkler, was relieved by LT R. Fikes. The Engineering Officer, LT K. Ransom, was relieved by LT L. Smith. The Navigation Officer, LT J. Babb, detached May 2001. LTJG M. Cappio assumed duties as Navigation Officer October 2001. The Operations Officer, LCDR C. Zayatz, was relieved by LT J. Haydel.


S. G. SQUIRES

Command Composition and Organization

Commanding Officer

Captain Squires

Executive Officer

LCDR Lechner

Command Master Chief

CDCMC(SW) R. Paquian

Executive/Navigation Department

Chaplain

LT Owen

Navigator / Admin Officer

LTJG Cappio

Combat Cargo Officer

CW03 Ragsac

Medical Department

Medical

LT Craven

Dental

LT Fikes

Engineering Department

Chief Engineer

LT Smith

Main Propulsion Assistant

LTJG Davis

Damage Control Assistant

CW03 Guile

Aux Division

ENS Linder

P-1 Division

LTJG Haywood

P-2 Division

LTJG Learing

E Division

ENS Donovan

R Division

CW03 Guile

Deck Department

First Lieutenant

LT Wadell

Ship's Bos'n

CW03 Archer

Deck Division
ENS Atencio

3rd Division
ENS Carnes

Operations Department

Operations Officer
LT Haydel

CIC Officer
ENS O'Brien

Communications Officer
CW03 Beard

EMO
ENS Hickenbottom

Supply Department

Supply Officer
LT Armstrong

Disbursing / Sales Officer
ENS Mayled

Food Service Officer
ENS Semilla

Air Department

Air Officer
LCDR Balaton

A/C Fuels Officer
LT Pfister

Chronology Calendar Year 2001

January

01 - 07 Holiday Leave Period
08 - 22 Training and Upkeep
23 - 25 Underway, Sea Trials
26 - 31 Inport San Diego, CA

February

01 - 12 Training and Upkeep
13 - 16 Underway, SOCAL / Type Training
17 - 20 Inport San Diego, CA
21 - 23 Underway, SOCAL / Type Training
24 - 28 Training and Upkeep

March

01 - 16 Training and Upkeep
17 - 18 Inport San Diego, CA
19 - 25 Kernel Blitz 01 Onload
26 - 31 Kernel Blitz 01

April

01 - 05 Kernel Blitz 01
06 - 30 Upkeep and Training

May

01 - 03 Underway, Enroute to Cabo San Lucas, MX
04 - 08 Port Vist, Cabo San Lucas, MX
09 - 11 Underway, Enroute to San Diego, CA
12 - 20 Training and Upkeep
21 CART II Inport
22 - 25 CART II Underway SOCAL
26 - 31 Training and Upkeep

June

01 - 10 Training and Upkeep
11 - 15 TSTA I Inport
16 - 17 Inport, San Diego, CA
18 TSTA I Inport
19 - 22 TSTA I Underway SOCAL

23 - 24 Inport, San Diego, CA
25 TSTA I Inport
26 - 29 TSTA I Underway SOCAL
30 Inport, San Diego, CA

July

01 - 15 Upkeep and Training
16 - 18 BAT Inport
19 - 22 Inport, San Diego, CA
23 - 27 TSTA II Inport
28 - 30 Inport, San Diego, CA
31 TSTA I Inport

August

01 - 02 TSTA I Inport
03 - 07 TSTA II Underway SOCAL
08 - 10 FEP Underway SOCAL
11 - 19 Upkeep and Training
20 - 23 Underway, SOCAL / Local Ops
24 - 31 Upkeep and Training

September

01 - 09 Upkeep and Training
10 - 11 PREINSURV Inport
12 - 14 PREINSURV Underway SOCAL
15 - 16 Upkeep and Training
17 - 18 INSURV Inport
19 INSURV Underway / UMI SOCAL
20 - 21 INSURV Inport
22 - 23 Inport, San Diego, CA
24 - 30 Maintenance Availability

October

01 - 31 IMAV Inport
13 U.S. Navy Birthday

November

01 - 09 IMAV Inport
10 - 13 Upkeep and Training
14 - 16 Underway, Sea Trials

17 – 27 Upkeep and Training
28 – 30 IART Underway SOCAL

December

01 – 06 IART Underway SOCAL
07 – 16 Upkeep and Training
17 Underway, Enroute to Seal Beach, CA
18 – 20 Inport, Seal Beach, CA / Ammo Onload
21 – 31 Holiday Leave Period

USS DENVER COMMAND HISTORY NARRATIVE-CY 2001

In January of 2001, USS DENVER (LPD-9) completed a rigorous overhaul following its highly successfully 2000 Western Pacific deployment. The crew returned from a pleasant holiday with family and friends and began to prepare for the new training cycle. The ship got underway for sea trials 23-25 January and performed well after being pier-side for four months. The crew, despite its long absence from sea, demonstrated the outstanding seamanship that sustained them through a long, six-month deployment. On 24 January, DENVER conducted her first replenishment-at-sea evolution since a collision with USNS YUKON in July of 2000 with USNS GUADALUPE, receiving 370,000 gallons of marine diesel fuel and 40,042 gallons of aviation fuel. The specter of the collision now behind the ship and its crew and its initial sea trials complete, DENVER stood poised for a new era of maritime success during its Inter-Deployment Training Cycle (IDTC).

In February, DENVER continued with training and upkeep as the crew began to hone its combat readiness. It was a particularly important month for the Air Department as DENVER's flight deck was re-certified. February 7-9, the Air Department traveled to Yuma, AZ for its Phase I and II Vertical Short Take-off and Landing Certification. Having completed this crucial training, DENVER's Air Department was certified to land AV-8B Harriers on DENVER's flight deck. The ship got underway for two important independent steaming periods February 13-16 and February 21-23. While underway, DENVER and her crew focused on training evolutions specifically tailored to the LPD-4 class ship. DENVER also conducted another successful replenishment-at-sea on 14 February with USNS GUADALUPE, receiving 122,068 gallons of aviation fuel.

DENVER began March with a two-week upkeep and training period prior to the biannual joint Navy-Marine Corps exercise, Kernel Blitz. During this time DENVER hosted 45 international officers from the Air Warfare College for lunch and a tour of the ship on 8 March. The event was a wonderful opportunity for professional and cultural exchange and helped build professional relations with our allies. The ship then conducted an onload of the Marine's equipment and munitions from 19-25 March and got underway on 26 March. Working with several other ships as well as a Marine Expeditionary Brigade, DENVER performed superbly as the Primary Control Unit. Responsible for two beaches, DENVER landed the first forces ashore, a perfectly timed launch and landing of twenty-five Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAVs). After the initial landing, DENVER responded to an unexpected requirement to load and land the Army Follow-on Echelon, an evolution conducted with the utmost precision and efficiency. During the entire exercise, the ship moved over 100,000 pounds of cargo across its well deck and safely to the beach via Land Craft Utility (LCU) and Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC). In addition, DENVER successfully conducted an emergency recovery of a single-engine LCU and a replenishment-at-sea with USNS TIPPECANOE, receiving 255,730 gallons of marine diesel fuel on 26 March.

DENVER returned from its highly successful Kernel Blitz exercise on 5 April. Prior to pulling inport, the ship executed another mishap-free replenishment-at-sea, the second of the at-sea period, receiving 140,649 gallons of marine diesel fuel from USNS GUADALUPE on 4 April. The rest of the month was spent inport during a training and upkeep period. DENVER's Integrated Training Team began developing complex training scenarios in order to drill the crew

in preparation for the upcoming Inter-Deployment Training Cycle. Always looking far into the future, the crew began identifying material discrepancies and enforcing high standards of excellence during ship zone inspections in preparation for DENVER's five year Inspection and Survey in September.

On 1 May, DENVER got underway and transited down south for a port visit to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Arriving the 4 May and anchoring in the harbor, DENVER sailors got the opportunity to celebrate Cinco de Mayo and enjoy five days of well-deserved liberty. While there, the crew participated in a number of community relations programs that helped foster friendly relations between our two countries. The officers and chief petty officers of DENVER attended a spectacular social event hosted by the port liaison, Mr. Sonny Irvine, at his home. On the way back to San Diego, DENVER refueled at sea, receiving 268,821 gallons of marine diesel fuel from USNS TIPPECANOE on 10 May. The following day, the ship returned to San Diego and began a two-week upkeep period. On 22 May DENVER officially began the Basic Phase of the IDTC, getting underway for Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART). CART was a robust, performance-based assessment of a unit's readiness in each mission area except the amphibious, mine and salvage mission areas. Evaluated by Afloat Training Pacific, DENVER returned on May 25 for another upkeep and training period with a clear picture of where it had to go in order to achieve combat readiness.

In June, DENVER ended a two-week upkeep period on 11 June with the beginning of the inport portion of its first Tailored Ships Training Availability (TSTA-ALPHA). During this period, DENVER devoted all its energy to conducting complex training evolutions that emphasized coordinated efforts across departmental boundaries integrating the entire ship's crew. The crew's hard work paid off later that month when the ship got underway for the at-sea portion of TSTA-A. Over the course of two underway periods, June 19-22 and June 26-29, DENVER performed well and demonstrated to Afloat Training Group inspectors that it had made definite progress toward its goal of optimum combat readiness. The ship also conducted Deck Landing Qualifications (DLQs) for CH-46 helicopters, providing excellent training for both pilots and DENVER's flight deck crew. After these highly successful training periods, DENVER returned to port for another two-week upkeep period.

The month of July began with the crew taking a day off to celebrate Independence Day. As one of the best amphibious ships on the waterfront, DENVER looked marvelous with all signal flags flying for full-dress ship. The rest of the month proved to be a busy one full of training and preparation for DENVER. Beginning with a Basic Amphibious Training period 16-18 July and ending with the inport portion of second phase TSTA 23-27 July, DENVER conducted more advanced training in anticipation of the ship's Final Evaluation Problem (FEP).

August found DENVER busy with final preparations for the ship's FEP. FEP represents the culmination of the Basic Phase of training and the opportunity to demonstrate the ship's ability to conduct multiple simultaneous combat missions and support functions and to survive complex casualty control situations under stressful conditions. Conducting nearly non-stop General Quarters, the ship's Training Teams pushed the crew hard. The ship got underway on 3 August for the at-sea portion of second phase TSTA. DENVER spent a few days perfecting the crew's training and conducted a highly professional and safe replenishment at sea, receiving 286,422 gallons of marine diesel fuel from USNS GUADALUPE. On 8 August DENVER began its FEP. Over a period of two and a half days, the ship simulated responding to multi-

dimensional threats and countering ship-wide damage. The culmination of FEP was a Total Ship Survivability Exercise which required restoring weapons and containing battle damage in a timed exercise. Utilizing over thirty embarked midshipmen as casualties, DENVER successfully responded to the most aggressive exercise seen in recent memory. Returning confidently to port on 10 August, DENVER received official word from Commander Amphibious Group Three that the ship had passed its FEP. This immense success signaled the end of the Basic Phase of the IDTC for DENVER and marked a shift in command focus: DENVER's upcoming Inspection and Survey. With the inspection less than a month away, the crew continued its hard work focusing on correcting material discrepancies identified during zone inspections and cleaning the ship to DENVER's high standards. The ship got underway 20-23 August to hone its performance at sea, conducting numerous evolutions including DLQs for CH-46 helicopters. By the end of the month, the ship was ready to shine during the inspection.

Despite the dark events that transpired 11 September 2001, DENVER maintained her level of readiness and command focus. The ship conducted a self-assessment Pre-INSURV at sea 12-14 September. On 13 September, DENVER took on 194,933 gallons of marine diesel fuel from USNS TIPPECANOE. When the Board of Inspection and Survey came onboard 17-21 September, DENVER performed with the utmost professionalism. The key to DENVER's success as inspectors noted was the exceptional ability of the crew to self-assess its material deficiencies and coordinate efforts to make necessary corrections. The most important part of the INSURV was the Underway Material Inspection which took place 19 September. During what was labeled one of the Navy's most successful INSURVs for a LPD, Denver's Close-in Weapons System scored 85 percent on its Detect-to-Engage evolution. INSURV inspectors lauded the CIWS engagement as "the best they have seen." DENVER also excelled in a number of other major mission areas: the Engineering Department demonstrated a successful full power run and Deck Department successfully launched, operated, and recovered the ship's small boats.

During October, DENVER took a step back from its rigorous operational schedule for a six-week mid-IDTC maintenance availability. Of most significant note, DENVER's flight deck was completely resurfaced and numerous staterooms and berthings received needed refurbishment. Focusing on fixing discrepancies from the INSURV, training, and preparing for her upcoming Amphibious Specialty Training, the crew continued to progress toward combat readiness during the inport period. DENVER celebrated the United States Navy Birthday on October 13 with a cake cutting celebration and a speech by Commanding Officer, Captain Stephen G. Squires. On 26 October, DENVER celebrated its 33rd year of distinguished commissioned service.

November 2001 proved to be a busy month for DENVER. Getting underway 14-16 November for amphibious training and sea trials, the ship had one last opportunity to drill prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. DENVER conducted a full power run, launched and recovered ship's boats, fired the CIWS, and executed several other seamanship evolutions, including an underway replenishment with USNS GUADALUPE on 15 November, during which the ship received 164,534 gallons of marine diesel fuel. After a highly successful at-sea period, the crew enjoyed a few days off for the Thanksgiving holiday to spend with friends and family. Immediately following the holidays, DENVER got right back down to business, getting underway 28 November for the ship's Amphibious Specialty Training (AST). Over the ten-day period the ship launched a wide variety of amphibious vehicles, ranging from LCUs to LCACs. DENVER performed well above standards during the ten day AST. Conducting what

Commander Naval Beach Group One representatives called “textbook AAV recoveries” and numerous LCAC and LCU operations, DENVER certified its well deck and Combat Information Center to conduct all facets of amphibious operations in support of Amphibious Readiness Group objectives. On top of these great successes, the ship also conducted DLQs with CH-46 helicopters.

December of 2001 proved to be a rewarding final month to a busy year for DENVER. Shortly after DENVER’s return from AST, the crew hosted a group of foreign officers from Expeditionary Warfare Training Group Pacific on 13 December. Sailors from around the world had an opportunity to share and enrich one another in their mutual love for life at sea. Later that month in preparation for its 2002 Western Pacific Deployment, DENVER transited to Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach on 17 December in order to onload the Marine Expeditionary Unit ammunition package. The entire crew participated in loading, inventorying, and storing over 100,000 lbs. of over 200 types of ammunition, explosives, and incendiaries. Working nearly around the clock, DENVER finished loading in less than three days and headed back to San Diego for the Christmas standdown period. The holiday period began on 21 December as DENVER sailors traveled across the country to be with their families and loved ones over the holiday season.

2001 was a high watermark year for USS DENVER, a year completely dedicated to one goal: combat readiness. Working through a difficult training cycle, weathering the events and subsequent fallout from September 11, and promoting both short range and long range material primacy, DENVER’s crew proved that they are truly warriors. Now DENVER must face other challenges in an emerging world of asymmetrical warfare during her upcoming 2002 Western Pacific deployment. In this new environment, one thing is sure: the USS DENVER and her crew possess the warrior spirit that will ensure that they will always come out “a mile high, a mile ahead.”