DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN (CG 57)
FPO AP 96671-1177

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From: Commanding Officer, USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN (CG 57)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)

Subj: USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN ANNUAL COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1999

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Command Chronology
(3) Command Narrative
(4) Supporting Documentation

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted.

P. T. SERFASS JR.

Copy to:
COMCARGRU SEVEN

Command Composition and Organization

MISSION:

LAKE CHAMPLAIN operates offensively in a high-density, multi-threat environment as an integral part of a Carrier Battle Group or Surface Action Group (SAG) to include striking targets along hostile shorelines and well inland.

ISIC:

Operational:

01 Jan – 28 Feb	CTG 035.2	Commander, Carrier Group Seven
01 Mar – 07 Mar	CTG 035.9.50	Commander, Carrier Group Seven
08 Mar – 11 Mar	CTU 035.9.43	Commander, Carrier Group Seven
12 Mar – 16 May	CTG 035.2	Commander, Carrier Group Seven
17 May – 28 May	CTU 035.9.54	Commander, Carrier Group Seven
29 May – 08 Jun	CTU 035.9.37	Commander, Carrier Group Seven
09 Jun – 26 Aug	CTG 035.2	Commander, Carrier Group Seven
27 Aug – 31 Dec	CTG 030.2	Commander, Carrier Group Seven

Administrative:

01 Jan – 31 Dec	Commander, Carrier Group Seven

UNITS UNDER OPERATIONAL CONTROL:

None

COMMANDING OFFICER:

01 Jan – 31 Dec	Captain P. T. Serfass Jr.

PERMANENT DUTY STATION:

Naval Station San Diego, California

AIRCRAFT EMBARKED:

10 May – 14 May	HSL 45	LONEWOLF 57
17 May – 08 Jun	HSL 45	LONEWOLF 53/55
06 Aug – 26 Aug	HSL 45	LONEWOLF 53/55
29 Oct – 22 Nov	HSL 45	LONEWOLF 53/55

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY FOR 1999

01 Jan – 13 Jan	Holiday Upkeep Period
07 Jan	Simulated Land Attack Missile Exercise (SLAMEX) Commander Carrier Group Seven Visit
13 Jan	Visit Ship
15 Jan	MR1(SW) R. Day reenlistment on the mess decks Integrated Training Team (ITT) Scenario
19 Jan	LTT
20 Jan	Armed Forces Communications Electronics Association-United States Naval Institute Luncheon, Commanding Officer and IC1(SW) Brown attended.
21 Jan	Chief Petty Officer Exam-mess decks PN2(SW) K. Grissett retires onboard
22 Jan	HMC(SW/FMF) Mullin reenlistment on the bridge ITT Scenario
25 Jan	ITT Scenario
26 Jan	ITT Scenario
27 Jan	ITT Scenario
28 Jan	SLAMEX ITT Scenario
29 Jan	Fast Cruise ITT Scenario
01 Feb	ITT Scenario
02 Feb	Underway en route Southern California (SOCAL) Operating Area Simulated small boat attack Pre-action calibration firing (PACFIRE) (5 inch/Close-in Weapons System) Anti-Air Warfare Exercise 12/20/21 ITT Scenario

03 Feb	ITT Scenario Underway Replenishment (UNREP) with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK Burial at Sea Flying Squad Drill Engineering Casualty Control (ECC) Drills
05 Feb	Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
10 Feb	Sports Car Collectors Of America Tour
11 Feb	EN2(SW) Ruiz reenlistment in Central Control Station Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification (CMTQ) Administrative Inspection
12 Feb	CMTQ Scenario CMTQ outbrief OS2(SW) P. Friede reenlistment in Combat Information Center
17 Feb	Underway en route SOCAL Operating Area PACFIRE (5inch/CIWS) Missile exercise rehearsal Deck Landing Qualifications (DLQ's) Helicopter Ant-Submarine Squadron (HSL) 45 ECC drills
18 Feb	UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK Steel Beach picnic ECC Drills Exercise General Quarters (GQ)/ Main Space Fire Drill (MSFD) Missile exercise rehearsal Nacho night, mess decks War at Sea exercise
19 Feb	Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California Officer of the Deck qualification board
22 Feb	Operations Department awards ceremony Commander, Naval Surface Forces visits for Black History Month Celebration Black History Month Celebration
23 Feb	Underway en route SOCAL Operating Area Vandal exercise rehearsal ECC drills

24 Feb	Missile exercise Vandal exercise Officer of the deck qualification board ECC Drills
25 Feb	Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
26 Feb	Engineering Department awards ceremony SH1(SW) Frierson retires onboard
01 Mar	Underway en route San Francisco, California PACFIRE (5 inch/CIWS) DLQ's Helicopter Squadron 10
02 Mar	E-4 exam-mess decks Officer of the Deck qualification board Small arms familiarization fire (FAMFIRE) Tomahawk Land Attack Missile exercise (TLAMEX) Exercise GQ/MSFD UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANNOCK ECC drills Undersea Warfare (USW) Exercise
03 Mar	Officer of the deck Qualification Board ITT Scenario Emergency Destruction/Abandon Ship Drill PACFIRE (5 inch) ECC drills Aegis Combat Training Simulation (ACTS) scenario
04 Mar	E-5 exam Small Arms FAMFIRE ITT Scenario
05 Mar	Moored Pier 30/32, San Francisco, California
06 Mar	DC2 Rowe reenlistment on flight deck
08 Mar	Underway en route San Diego, California ECC Drills Exercise MSFD/GQ TLAMEX ACTS Scenario

09 Mar	E-6 exam Small arms FAMFIRE UNREP with USNS RAPPAHANOCK USW Scenario
10 Mar	Flying Squad Drill DLQ's with HSL 43/45/49 Commander, Carrier Group Seven arrives to observe Torpedo exercise CIWS Tracking exercise
11 Mar	Torpedo exercise Awards Ceremony Commander, Carrier Group Seven departs Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
16 Mar	25 MM gun install SM2(SW) Harris reenlistment on the signal bridge Surface Warfare Officers qualification board
17 Mar	USW Scenario Swimmer Operations – Seal Team Five STG1(SW) Roberts reenlistment at Submarine Base, Point Loma
18 Mar	Safety Standdown ET1(SW) Berry retires onboard ITT Scenario
19 Mar	Underway for Family Day Cruise Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
22 Mar	Commanding Officer/Electronics Material Officer attend C4I executive brief SH-60B PUK onload Hull Cleaning Automated Teller Machine install Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team One conduct LIMPETEX on board. Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) Team Trainer
23 Mar	Hull Cleaning RP2 Bagsic reenlistment in Crews Training Room NSFS Team Trainer
24 Mar	Hull Cleaning NSFS Team Trainer

25 Mar	NSFS Team Trainer Hull Cleaning SLAMEX Ship Tour – United States Marine Corps NSFS Students Exercise GQ/MSFD
26 Mar	Hull Cleaning NSFS Exam
29 Mar	Underway en route Shore Bombardment Area (SHOBA) NSFS Spotter Services Flying Squad Drill
ECC Drills	
30 Mar	NSFS Spotter Services ECC Drills
31 Mar	NSFS Firing Exercise One ECC Drills Exercise MSFD/GQ TLAMEX
01 Apr	Anchoring Practice – Coronado Roads Leaders to Sea Ship's Electronic Signal E Facility Range ITT Scenario DLQ's HSL-45/49 Spades Tournament-mess decks
02 Apr	Leaders to Sea UNREP with USNS PECOS Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
03 Apr	Advance clocks to conform with +7T, Daylight Savings Time Shift to Summer Uniforms
05 Apr	Ship Visit - Expeditionary Warfare Training Group Pacific Foreign Students
06 Apr	ACTS Scenario
08 Apr	ITT Scenario
09 Apr	Naval Special Warfare Command – Hull Familiarization Dive RM2(SW) Harge reenlistment STAR OF INDIA

12 Apr	Combat Systems Department Semi-Annual Physical Readiness Test (PRT) Engineering Department Semi-Annual PRT Commanding Officer, HSL-45 visits
14 Apr	Administrative Hearing Board, held on board Ship Visit – Marine Corps Command and Staff International Officers
15 Apr	SLAMEX
16 Apr	Combat Systems Awards Ceremony
17 Apr	Wardroom Dining Out, Guest of Honor RADM Campbell, Commander, Carrier Group Seven,
20 Apr	Commander, Carrier Group Seven visits to present COMNAVSURFPAC Silver Anchor Award Ships Equipment Maintenance Assist Team (SEMAT) assist visit
21 Apr	SEMAT assist visit Raytheon Systems conducting C4I Ship checks
22 Apr	SEMAT assist visit Raytheon Systems conducting C4I Ship checks Junior Officers visit USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74) for familiarization tour USW Exercise 25 MM ammo on load
23 Apr	SEMAT assist visit Raytheon Systems conducting C4I Ship checks ITT Scenario
26 April	Underway en route SOCAL Operating Area Anchoring Practice – Coronado Roads VANDALEX Rehearsal Planeguard – USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74)
27 Apr	PACFIRE (5 inch/CIWS/25 MM) Tracking Exercise – Pacific Missile Test Center (PMTC) VANDALEX (PMTC) DLQ's with HSl-45 TLAMEX

28 Apr	Lifeguard Duties for USS JOHN C. STENNIS/USNS PECOS UNREP DLQ's with HS-8 Planeguard – USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74)
29 Apr	Commanding Officer flys to USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74) for courtesy call Flying Squad Drill UNREP with USNS PECOS Planeguard – USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74)
30 Apr	Flying Squad Drill ITT Scenario DLQ's with HS-8 Planeguard – USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74) Chili Night – Mess decks
01 May	Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
03 May	JOHN C. STENNIS Battle Group (JCSBG) Sea Combat Commander Team Trainer
04 May	JCSBG Sea Combat Commander Scenario North Pacific Weather Brief
05 May	JCSBG Sea Combat Commander Team Trainer Steel Beach Picnic
06 May	JCSBG Sea Combat Commander Team Trainer
07 May	ENC Enigk retires onboard Ship Visit – American Society of Plastics Tour Ship Visit – Nuclear Propulsion Officer Candidates
10 May	Underway en route SOCAL Operating Area CONSTELLATION Battle Group Opposition Forces (OPFOR) for COMPTUEX 99-1 Embark HSL-45 detachment 5 UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO
11 May	Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) Training
13 May	UNREP with USS SACRAMENTO Ice Cream Social – mess decks

14 May	Debark HSL-45 detachment 5 Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California Officer of the Deck qualification board COMPTUEX 99-2 Initial planning Conference
17 May	Underway en route Juneau, Alaska Embark HSL-45 detachment 5 Embark Midshipmen for Summer Training
19 May	PACFIRE (5 inch/25 MM/50 caliber)
20 May	SLAMEX Burial at Sea
21 May	Small Arms FAMFIRE AAW-24-SF
23 May	Nacho/Bingo Night – mess decks
24 May	Moored Coast Guard Pier, Juneau, Alaska Reception held on board for Mayor of Juneau and Chief of Staff, Coast Guard District Eleven
25 May	Open for Public Visiting
26 May	Open for Public Visiting
27 May	Open for Public Visiting
28 May	Underway en route Victoria, British Columbia
30 May	Encounter exercise with Canadian Pacific Fleet DLQ's with Canadian Navy UNREP with HMCS PROTECTEUR
31 May	Moored Cruise Ship Terminal, Victoria, British Colombia Commanding Officer makes courtesy call on Chief of Staff, Canadian Pacific Fleet
04 Jun	Underway en route San Diego, California
05 Jun	Small Arms FAMFIRE ECC Drills
06 Jun	Dominos Tournament – mess decks

07 Jun	Exercise GQ/MSFD
08 Jun	Debark HSL – 45 detachment 5 Frocking Ceremony for Petty Officer Selectes PACFIRE (5 inch/25 MM/50 caliber) UNREP with USNS GUADALUPE DLQ's with HSL 43/45/49
09 Jun	Anchoring Exercise – Coronado Roads Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
10 Jun	Officer of the Deck Qualification Board
11 Jun	COMPTUEX 99-2 Mid Planning Conference
14 Jun	JCSBG Air Defense Team Trainer C4I Installation Period Begins
15 Jun	JCSBG Air Defense Team Trainer
16 Jun	JCSBG Air Defense Team Trainer
17 Jun	Visit Ship – International Surface Warfare Students Visit Ship – Helicopter Aviation Association Visit Ship – Texas State Employees Visit Ship – American Society of Merchant Bankers Association
21 Jun	Commander, Naval Surface Forces Pacific (CNSP) Surface Line Week
22 Jun	CNSP Surface Line Week Selected Restricted Availability (SRA) 2000 Pre-Planning Meeting
23 Jun	CNSP Surface Line Week
24 Jun	CNSP Surface Line Week
25 Jun	CNSP Surface Line Week Picnic FC2(SW) Wagner reenlistment in Radar 3
29 Jun	SRA Meeting
01 Jul	FCC(SW) Beller reenlistment in Radar 3 LAKE CHAMPLAIN Day at the Ballpark
06 Jul	JCSBG Sea Combat Commander Team Trainer OS2(SW) Carney reenlistment in Combat Information Center

07 Jul	JCSBG Sea Combat Commander Team Trainer
08 Jul	JCSBG Sea Combat Commander Team Trainer
09 Jul	JCSBG Sea Combat Commander Team Trainer
13 Jul	Visit Ship – NROTC Midshipmen Vice Admiral Natter visit
15 Jul	Visit Ship – NROTC Midshipmen
16 Jul	LAKE CHAMPLAIN Picnic – Admiral Baker Field
20 Jul	Visit Ship – Sonar Technician A School
21 Jul	STGC(SW) Wilson retires onboard
22 Jul	SLAMEX
23 Jul	M-14 Qualification Firing – North Island
26 Jul	Year 2000 Fast Cruise
27 Jul	Fast Cruise Year 2000 Fast Cruise Out Brief Visit Ship – Navy Medical School Students C4I Installation End Date
28 Jul	Underway for C4I Sea Trials DLQ's with HSL 43/47
29 Jul	PACFIRE (5 inch/CIWS) Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
30 Jul	Underway for Family Day Cruise BM3(SW) Ramsingh reenlistment on Bridge Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
02 Aug	Conduct Chief of Naval Operations Project 0251 – Advanced Tomahawk Weapons System (ATWCS) Testing IC2(SW) Bynum reenlistment in 49 Radar Room
03 Aug	Chief of Naval Operations Project 0251 – ATWCS Testing Tomahawk Year 2000 Live Firing Test Meeting

04 Aug	Chief of Naval Operations Project 0251 – ATWCS Testing
05 Aug	Chief of Naval Operations Project 0251 – ATWCS Testing JCSBG COMPTUEX 99-2 Pre-sail Meeting BGSIT Year 2000 Testing Pre-sail Meeting
06 Aug	Underway for COMPTUEX 99-2 Ammo Onload Bravo Pier, Naval Air Station North Island, California Embark HSL 45 detachment 5 PACFIRE (5 inch/CIWS) Planeguard – USS JOHN C. STENNIS
08 Aug	TLAMEX Anti-Air Warfare Exercise 12/20/21
09 Aug	UNREP with USS BRIDGE Torpedo Exercise
10 Aug	Missile Exercise Embark Commander, Destroyer Squadron Nine
11 Aug	Debark Commander, Destroyer Squadron Nine TLAMEX
13 Aug	BGSIT Year 2000 Testing UNREP with USS BRIDGE Embark Observers for Tomahawk Year 2000 Live Firing Exercise
14 Aug	BGSIT Year 200 Testing Tomahawk Year 2000 Live Firing Exercise Debark Observers for Tomahawk Year 2000 Live Firing Exercise
15 Aug	Moored Bravo Pier, Naval Station North Island, California Ammo Onload Underway en route Pacific Missile Test Range
16 Aug	Back-up Tomahawk Year 2000 Live Firing Exercise
17 Aug	UNREP with USS BRIDGE
18 Aug	TLAMEX
20 Aug	Naval Surface Fire Support Firing Exercise Two – San Clemente Island
21 Aug	UNREP with USS BRIDGE

22 Aug	Commander, Carrier Group One visit
25 Aug	Final Battle Problem UNREP with USNS GUADALUPE
26 Aug	Debark HSL 45 detachment 5 Moored Pier Two, Naval Station San Diego, California
30 Aug	Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR)
31 Aug	CSRR
01 Sep	CSRR
02 Sep	CSRR
03 Sep	CSRR
07 Sep	CSRR
08 Sep	CSRR
09 Sep	CSRR E-4 Advancement Exams
10 Sep	CSRR
13 Sep	First Anthrax Vaccination
14 Sep	E-5 Advancement Exam
16 Sep	Chief Petty Officer Pinning and Initiation E-6 Advancement Exam MS1(SW) Frakes retires onboard
20 Sep	Congressional Staff Visit
23 Sep	Naval Surface Forces Pacific Fleet Command Chaplain Visit
27 Sep	Second Anthrax Vaccination
29 Sep	SRA 2000 Update Meeting
30 Sep	SLAMEX FCCS(SW) Danforth retires onboard LAKE CHAMPLAIN Pre-deployment meeting for spouses and families

01 Oct	NCC(SW) reenlistment on the Bridge
04 Oct	Force Air Defense Team Trainer (FADTT)
05 Oct	FADTT
06 Oct	FADTT
07 Oct	FADTT
08 Oct	FADTT
12 Oct	Command PRT Command Picnic Third Anthrax Vaccination
13 Oct	Final Planning Conference FLEETEX 00-1 House Appropriations Committee Staff Visit
14 Oct	All Comers at Sea Training Pre-sail Conference Wardroom versus Chiefs Mess Softball Game
15 Oct	Visit Ship – USS JAMES C. OWENS Renuion Group
18 Oct	Engineering Assist Visit Underway for All Comers at Sea Training
19 Oct	Engineering Assist Visit Torpedo Exercise General Counsel of the Navy Visit DLQ's with HSL 45
20 Oct	Engineering Assist Visit Exercise MSFD/GQ Burial at Sea
21 Oct	Engineering Assist Visit Exercise MSFD/GQ UNREP with USNS PECOS
22 Oct	Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California Carrier Group Seven Change of Command
28 Oct	JCSBG FLEETEX 00-1 Pre-sail Meeting

29 Oct	Underway for FLEETEX 00-1 Embark HSL 45 detachment 5 Planeguard – USS JOHN C. STENNIS
30 Oct	CONREP/VERTREP with SS CAPE GIBSON
31 Oct	Shift to Winter Uniforms Retard clocks to +8U TLAMEX Highline Transfer with USS PORT ROYAL
01 Nov	DK1(SW) Sigua reenlistment on mess decks
02 Nov	HULKEX – Live Firing Exercise on former Navy Ship UNREP with USS BRIDGE
03 Nov	FLEETEX 00-1 48 Hour Scenario Texas Thunder
04 Nov	FLEETEX 00-1 48 Hour Scenario Texas Thunder
05 Nov	FLEETEX 00-1 48 Hour Scenario Texas Thunder
06 Nov	Commander. Carrier Group Seven visits Planeguard – USS JOHN C. STENNIS
07 Nov	Spades Tournament
08 Nov	PACFIRE (5 inch) Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California JCSBG Force Protection Exercise
09 Nov	JCSBG Force Protection Exercise
10 Nov	JCSBG Force Protection Exercise
12 Nov	Underway for JTFEX 00-1
14 Nov	Commander, Third Fleet Visit Awards Ceremony
15 Nov	Naval Surface Fire Support in support of BONHOMME RICHARD AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP (BHARG)

16 Nov	Naval Surface Fire Support in support of BHARG UNREP with USS BRIDGE
20 Nov	Naval Surface Fire Support
21 Nov	Bingo Night
22 Nov	Debark HSL 45 detachment 5 Moored Pier Eight, Naval Station San Diego, California
24 Nov	SK2(SW) Buenrostro reenlistment in Supply Support
29 Nov	Safety Standdown Cruise Book Photographs Underway en route Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, California Moored Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, California Deployment Ammo Onload
30 Nov	Deployment Ammo Onload
01 Dec	Deployment Ammo Onload Underway en route Naval Station San Diego, California Moored Pier Eight Naval Station San Diego, California
02 Dec	Smartship Meeting
03 Dec	First Leave period Begins Medical/Dental Readiness Assessment 0A2 Arrival Conference
06 Dec	Medical/Dental Readiness Assessment SRA 2000 Ship Checks Core SRA Work Definition Conference Hull Cleaning
07 Dec	Medical/Dental Readiness Assessment SRA 2000 Ship Checks Smartship Ship Checks Hull Cleaning Naval Surface Forces Pacific Fleet Surgeon Visits
08 Dec	Medical/Dental Readiness Assessment SRA 2000 Ship Checks Smartship Ship Checks Hull Cleaning

09 Dec	Medical/Dental Readiness Assessment SRA 2000 Ship Checks Smartship Ship Checks
10 Dec	SRA 2000 Ship Checks Smartship Ship Checks EW1 Compton retires onboard
11 Dec	Smartship Ship Checks
13 Dec	Naval Media Center Pre-deployment Interviews
16 Dec	First Leave period Ends
17 Dec	Frocking Ceremony for E-6/E-5 Selectees
18 Dec	Second Leave Period Begins LAKE CHAMPLAIN Children's Christmas Party
20 Dec	OSC(SW) Crane reenlistment in Combat Information Center
22 Dec	Commander, Carrier Group Seven Visits
28 Dec	Second Leave Period Ends STG1(SW) Landers reenlistment on the Forecastle

COMMAND NARRATIVE FOR 1999

USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN begin her eleventh year in service in her homeport of San Diego, California under the command of Captain Paul T. Serfass Jr. The Officers and Crew were enjoying the final few days of a very rewarding and refreshing holiday stand down. The stand down period ended with a rush of activity as LAKE CHAMPLAIN begin working to prepare for the final test before the intermediate stage of the inter-deployment training cycle, the Final Evaluation Problem or FEP. LAKE CHAMPLAIN was one of the final ship's to undergo the early stages of the inter-deployment training cycle before the Chief of Naval Operations mandated inter-deployment training cycle workload reductions.

February begin with the final underway period before the graduation exercise of FEP. The week was spent validating the required items of the Tailored Ships Training Availability, requirements that had to be met before the ship could make a go for the FEP. The week was also a time of reflection as the ship conducted the first of many Burial at Seas for some of our departed shipmates from years past. The week ended with LAKE CHAMPLAIN validating FEP during the week, and moving on to the intermediate phase of training. February begin much as it ended with LAKE CHAMPLAIN underway conducting operations off the coast of California.

March was the beginning of a string of port visits that would be the highlight of the year for many of the crew members onboard LAKE CHAMPLAIN. LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway on the 1st of March en route to San Francisco, California for a three-day port visit. The port proved close enough for many of the crews family and friends to make the trip up and enjoy the visit with them. The transit back proved equally exciting as the ship embarked Rear Admiral Campbell, Carrier Group Seven, to observe a live firing torpedo exercise with a

simulated target off San Clemente Island before pulling back into San Diego. The rest of March proved uneventful as LAKE CHAMPLAIN busied itself with many pre-deployment meetings including the first of many meetings on the upcoming C4I installation period. However, on the 19th of March the officers and crew took some time off to enjoy a Family Day Cruise with their loved ones. The final week was spent with the Naval Surface Fire Support team undergoing a team trainer conducted onboard, in preparations for the upcoming FIREX I qualification shoot.

The first week of April was spent with ear plugs in and the ship shuddering as rounds were sent down range while LAKE CHAMPLAIN very successfully completed FIREX I. Through the course of the week, LAKE CHAMPLAIN fired over 350 rounds of 5-inch ammunition. The ship returned to port on Friday with the NSFS team celebrating their victory. Later in the month, the wardroom gathered at the Bahia resort in Mission Valley for a Dining Out, the guest of honor was RADM Campbell, who help to make the event memorable for all hands. Admiral Campbell again visited the ship in late April to present the LAKE CHAMPLAIN Command retention Team with the Silver Anchor Award for their hard work throughout 1998. The final week of April was spent conducting planeguard for the first time with the USS JOHN C. STENNIS.

May was a month that many onboard had been looking forward too for many months. LAKE CHAMPLAIN would be making a trip to the great white north of Alaska and Canada towards the end of the month. However, many other operational commitments had to be met before the fun could begin. LAKE CHAMPLAIN got together with the rest of the JOHN C. STENNIS Battlegroup for the first time to participate in a Sea Combat Commander Team Trainer. The following week, LAKE CHAMPLAIN got underway to participate as opposition

forces for the CONSTELLATION Battlegroup, HSL-45 detachment 5 also embarked, giving LAKE CHAMPLAIN a chance to work with its deployment Air Department for the first time.

Having finished with all of the operational commitments, LAKE CHAMPLAIN begins her trek north for port visits in Juneau, Alaska and Victoria, British Columbia. The first stop was a five-day port visit in Juneau, the crew thoroughly enjoyed the stop, with many MWR tours arranged including fishing trips, kayaking and a trip to Mendenhall Glacier. The city of Juneau was also given a chance to see LAKE CHAMPLAIN up close as more then 400 local citizens visited for tours. Underway again on rainy Alaska morning, en route to the Straits of Juan de Fuca to meet up with a Canadian Surface Action Group for an evening of exercises before the transit into Victoria. After five days, it was underway again back to the warmer waters of Southern California and a chance to spend a few weeks at home before the demanding Battlegroup work-ups.

The months of June and July were spent preparing for the January 2000 deployment, the largest undertaking during this time was by far the IT-21 installations. LAKE CHAMPLAIN was being outfitted with the some of the most technological advanced equipment ever put on surface vessels. The JOHN C. STENNIS Battlegroup would be the first Batttlegroup too deploy fully IT-21 compliant. This would allow for instantaneous communications between the Battlegroup Commander as well as his subordinate commanders. It would also allow for numerous quality of life improvements including continuous e-mail while underway including individual accounts for all crewmembers. It would also allow for web surfing, putting an unimaginable amount of information at the hands of every crewmember.

However, June and July wasn't all about IT-21, there was plenty of other activities to keep the crew busy. The Battlegroup got together in early June for the first of many Air Defense

Team Trainers. In the middle of the month, the ship and shore commands of San Diego got together for some friendly sporting and nautical events during Commander, Naval Surface Forces Pacific Surface Line Week competition. The first of many meetings to discuss the Selected Restricted Availability in September of 2000 were also held onboard. The entire crew and their families getting together at Qualcomm Stadium to celebrate LAKE CHAMPLAIN day at the ballpark marked the beginning of July. LAKE CHAMPLAIN ended it's inport time at the end of July getting underway to do a trail run with all of its new C4I equipment, finishing the month off with another very successful dependent's cruise for family and friends.

With the inport work complete it was time for LAKE CHAMPLAIN and the members of the JOHN C. STENNIS Battlegroup to head to sea for the first time together in order to conduct COMPTUEX 99-2. After making a brief stop at Bravo Pier to onload a Tomahawk, it was out to sea for 20 days of exercises and drills. The beginning of the underway was conducting to the members of the Battlegroup familiarizing themselves with each other and conducting some level exercise. On the 13th of August, JOHN C. STENNIS Battlegroup were the first Americans to celebrate the new millennium as the clocks were rolled ahead for a week to conduct extensive Y2K testing. LAKE CHAMPLAIN was also detached and headed up north to do a test firing of a Tomahawk missile in the Y2K environment. Despite some initial glitches, LAKE CHAMPLAIN's missile impacted at China Lake Naval Test Range and the test was a resounding success. August also marked the end of an era as LCDR Thomas C. Neal was relieved by LCDR Kerry S. Gilpin as Executive Officer.

September marked the final major inport period before Pre-overseas movement, and the last chance for major work to be completed. The month began with LAKE CHAMPLAIN undergoing Combat Systems Readiness Review having all of its combat systems equipment

checked and verified prior to deployment. September also marked the beginning of the Anthrax vaccination required of all crewmembers prior to deployment to the Arabian Gulf. The month also proved as a milestone for two of our crew as NCC(SW) Sierra and FCC(SW) Maddox were initiated by the chief's mess.

October was spent enjoying a week at sea without the Battlegroup, conducting many drills and exercises. The General Counsel of the Navy also paid a visit to the LAKE CHAMPLAIN in October. The crew also conducted yet another Burial at Sea off the coast. On the 28th of October the Battlegroup was again underway to participate in FLEETEX 00-1.

The final month of Battlegroup operations before deployment begin with a bang as the entire Battlegroup lined up to fire and sink an old retired naval vessel for training. The Battlegroup quickly transitioned from live firing to the artificial world of the Final Battle Problem to hone our skills in a real world situation. The entire Battlegroup pulled into San Diego on the 8th of November and immediately begin the 3-day force protection/anti-terrorism exercise. During the three days of the exercise all members of the Battlegroup were confronted with real world situations that tested the vigilance of all watch standers. Following a relaxing day off for Veterans Day the Battlegroup was underway again to conduct the final exercise of JTFEX 00-1.

Immediately after getting underway, LAKE CHAMPLAIN was directed to head north to offer protection to the BONHOMME RICHARD Amphibious Ready Group while she conducted a simulated amphibious assault off the coast of Camp Pendalton. On the 14th of November, VADM Browne, Third Fleet arrived onboard for a visit and to get a chance to meet the crew. Following the amphibious assault, LAKE CHAMPLAIN was directed to rejoin the Battlegroup for the final days of JTFEX 00-1, on the 22nd of November the Battlegroup returned to deployment having completed all of its' required pre-deployment exercises, and ready for WESTPAC 2000.

After a quick trip to Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, California, LAKE CHAMPLAIN was ready to begin her pre-deployment stand down. With the exception of required repairs and necessary preparations the daily routine was severely reduced as the crew used the final few weeks before deployment for family time. The major work that did occur during December was the final maintenance availability, and also ship checks for both the Selected Restricted Availability and the Smart Ship installation both scheduled for September of 2000. The crew returned from the second leave period on the 28th of December and following the celebration of the new millennium the crew and officers of the LAKE CHAMPLAIN were ready for WESTPAC 2000.