



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS DEFENDER (MCM-2)

FPO AA 34090-1922

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From: Commanding Officer, USS DEFENDER (MCM 2)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC
20374-0571

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) Biography of Commanding Officer

1. Command Composition and Organization. USS DEFENDER (MCM 2) is the second Avenger Class Mine Countermeasures Vessel to join the fleet and is the first ship to bear the name "Defender." USS DEFENDER represents the most capable mine countermeasures platform currently in service. The ability of USS DEFENDER to hunt, neutralize and sweep mines in deep water, the littoral, to include all potential sea lane choke points, provides the U.S. Naval forces with a formidable defense platform.

Commanded by LCDR Thomas M. Negus, USS DEFENDER operates under Commander Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two and Commander Mine Warfare Command. She is currently homeported in Ingleside, TX.

2. Chronology.

1998

01JAN	Holiday/Upkeep
22JAN	Final Evaluation Problem
16FEB	Squadron Exercise 98-1
09MAR	Hull Cleaning
30MAR	Mine Recovery 98'
19MAY	Gulf of Mexico Exercise 98-1
21MAY	Transit to Brownsville TX
22MAY	Port Visit Brownsville TX
25MAY	Transit to Ingleside TX
01JUN	Technical Assessment Repair Groom and Evaluation Team (TARGET) / Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR)
19JUN	Transit to Little Creek VA
06JUL	Standing Naval Forces Channel 98'
17JUL	Transit to Newport RI
20JUL	Port Visit Newport RI
21JUL	LCDR Thomas M. Negus relieved CDR A.B. Fuller of command of USS DEFENDER (MCM 2)

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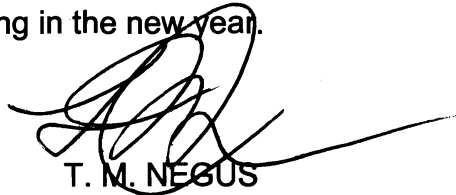
27JUL Transit to Rockland ME
30JUL Port Visit Rockland ME "Lobsterfest"
03AUG Transit to Annapolis MD
07AUG Port Visit Annapolis MD "Plebe Parent Weekend"
10AUG Transit to Charleston SC
13AUG Charleston SC Magnetic Offload
17AUG Charleston SC Degaussing
19AUG Transit to Mayport FL
21AUG Upkeep Mayport FL
23AUG Transit to Kings Bay GA
24AUG Upkeep Kings Bay FL
31AUG Transit to Key West FL
03SEP Refueling Key West FL
04SEP Transit to Ingleside TX
08SEP Arrive Ingleside TX
10SEP Heavy Weather Mooring in NAVSTA Ingleside Basin
08OCT Mine Recovery Operations
26OCT Command Assessment Readiness Training II (CART II)
18NOV Ordnance Handling Safety Assist Team (OHSAT) Visit
07DEC Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection (SESI)
17DEC Holiday Stand-Down

3. Narrative.

On 22 January 1998, DEFENDER completed her Final Evaluation Problem (FEP). The next month DEFENDER participated in Squadron Exercise 98-1 with USS SENTRY (MCM 3), USS ROBIN (MHC 54) and USS BLACK HAWK (MHC 58). Mine Recovery 98-1 followed shortly after and DEFENDER proved ready for deployment. Mission ready, DEFENDER participated in a Gulf of Mexico Exercise later in May. Shortly thereafter, she enjoyed a liberty port visit to Brownsville, TX where the ship participated in ship tours and events commemorating Brownsville's Sesquicentennial. Following a Technical Assessment Repair Groom and Evaluation Team (TARGET) visit and Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR) in June, DEFENDER left the Corpus Christi Operating Area to participate as a member of Standing Naval Forces Channel 98' Exercise and the NATO OCEANLANT 98' Exercise in Little Creek, VA with other Mine Countermeasures ships from England, Germany, Holland, and Belgium. Leaving Little Creek DEFENDER transited to Newport, RI where a change of command was held. LCDR Thomas M. Negus relieved CDR Andrew B. Fuller. After enjoying the lovely Newport weather and historical sites DEFENDER left Newport with a new Commanding Officer leading the way and transited to Rockland, ME for Maine's annual

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Lobsterfest. This festival also included their annual Sea Princess Contest where a few lucky DEFENDER crewmembers were able to meet and escort some of Rockland's most attractive beauty contestants. Since the overall theme of Lobsterfest was to enjoy dining on tasty lobster, before leaving Rockland the ship negotiated a deal to purchase over 90 lobster which were served to the crew the first night underway. What a meal! The next stop on DEFENDER's east coast deployment was Annapolis, MD where over 2,500 future Naval officers from the Naval Academy and their parents toured the world famous USS DEFENDER (MCM 2). The ship then left Annapolis to complete magnetic offload and degaussing in Charleston, SC. The degaussing runs went well. This, however, was to be the last time this range would be used for degaussing. Charleston was not all work; the crew enjoyed the historic and beautiful sites of the city during liberty. Leaving Charleston, DEFENDER sailed enroute to Ingleside, TX but hurricane warnings delayed her arrival by over two weeks. Hurricane diversions included stops in Mayport, FL, Kings Bay, GA, and Key West, FL. Once back home still other hurricane warnings caused DEFENDER to be placed in a heavy weather mooring arrangement in the Ingleside basin with other MCMs and MHCs. The ship finished out the year by conducting a successful Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection and Command Assessment Readiness Training II. DEFENDER went into her Holiday Stand-Down period on December 17, 1998 to bring in the new year.



T. M. NEGUS